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The People's Jim

The Labour Party does not and should not depend on a 'star system' of leadership. There is no need for socialists to intone 'Hail to the Chief'. But it is a very long time since the election of a new leader has resulted in such little enthusiasm. It would be a rare supporter of James Callaghan or the party itself who owned to any lifting of the heart – and even Mr Wilson's critics, like ourselves, always conceded that his initial period of oratory and style was an exciting one. Nor has the new Prime Minister decided to open the Callaghan years with any clarion call. His speech to the country on Monday night was a vintage Dixonian performance of the safety first theme, and nobody can doubt that he was wise to stick to the method at which he excels.

His victory was convincing enough to forestall any carping on that score; the Labour Party quite plainly is not in any mood to take risks and it had plenty of time in which to contemplate Mr Callaghan's record and qualities. He represents perfectly the conservative side of Labour's character. This element should not be derided; its solid virtues of loyalty and comradeship provide a bedrock of tradition which is indispensable. But on any question which involves a confrontation with ideas it reacts nervously and pragmatically. There have been few occasions over the years when this paper has regarded Mr Callaghan as an ally in the great causes of the day. With the honourable exception of his period as shadow Colonial Secretary, when he spoke out against the idiocies of Sandys and Lennox-Boyd, he has been a sheet-anchor for the cautious and even reactionary side of Labour's nature. His fetishisation of sterling, his deplorable attitude to Commonwealth immigration, his recent vacillation over Rhodesia, even his choice of business friends, have not given great cause for rejoicing. Nor, frankly, does his band of political associates in the Commons, most of whom we have disagreed with strongly at various times. But he is not a vindictive man, and only his past record gives reason to fear that he will break the Wilson tradition of tolerance within the party.

Undoubtedly, the decisive factor in Mr Callaghan's victory was his appeal to voters not habitually identified with Labour. Britain is a very conservative country, and a vote for Jim was certainly in tune with its mood. For this very reason, the Tories were unable to conceal their hope that he would not be chosen, and we must be grateful that they were disappointed. But these are uninspiring claims for Labour to make for itself. If the Tories fear the new leader, it must be because he is too much like themselves for them to be sure that their thunder will not be stolen. They cannot arouse the country against the menace of socialism with Mr Callaghan at the helm because not even the most credulous voter believes that he intends to deliver it. We have entered the epoch when stock market prices move up at the news of Labour prime ministers being chosen. Very little there to spur the faithful or send a shiver through the rich and the strong.

Burke once remarked that the hour was great but the honourable gentlemen were small. The docility and conservatism of the public should really be a phenomenon for the Labour Party to challenge rather than surrender to. We are not enduring the kind of crisis which can simply be sat out by stolid men (and Mr Callaghan's record of cool-headedness is not as impressive as the image sometimes suggests). Our troubles demand a policy which is radical in the literal sense of the word, and which is argued and fought for by men and women who believe in it fiercely. The new Prime Minister gives little enough promise of that. Nevertheless, he is the people's choice and may yet confound the critics. All that can be said at this stage is that our new leader has a certain amount to live down, and a number of fears to overcome. We hope to be proved wrong. When Hugh Gaitskell became leader the NEW STATESMAN wrote that 'unless he is to destroy both himself and the Labour Party, he must set out to win the confidence of those who have mistrusted him'. After his three hard-contested ballots, Mr Callaghan might like to ponder the same advice.

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Spotlight on Politics

James Fenton

Budgeting for the Left

Let us begin, once again, with Mrs Margaret Thatcher, and award her high marks for her off-the-cuff reply to the Budget Speech. Mr Denis Healey had had brandy to sustain him. Mrs Thatcher had had Sir Geoffrey Howe. When she rose to reply, after two hours of sometimes baffling exegesis, she was fluent, sharp and to the point. She impressed everybody, from Mr Norman Atkinson to Mr David James. (Who's he? He is Conservative member for Dorset North, and he was at the time suffused with delight at the capital transfer tax relief on his Historic Home, so you might expect that he would take a little winning, to bring him back to the fold.) Mrs Thatcher at once put her finger on the point which has dominated the Tory press ever since – that is, the 'constitutional' issue.

Mr Healey has made part of his fiscal policy dependent on trade union acceptance of a certain level of wage restraint. In so doing, the argument runs, he has handed over a part of the sovereignty of Parliament. Mrs Thatcher, giving what she called her instinctive democratic reaction, referred to this as taxation without representation, an abdication of part of the Chancellor's responsibilities. *The Times*, picking up the theme, considers that the authority and prestige of the Government and Commons has been reduced. The *Telegraph* tells us that a power lost by the Lords has passed to the TUC, the *Mail* says that Budget Day is dead, and everybody has been going on about the Corporate State.

Now while it is true that the incorporation of options in the Budget is rather novel, I fail to see that any constitutional precedent is involved. Mr Healey is not saying to the unions, as the *Mail* headline put it: 'Take a rise of only 3 per cent and then you can decide your rate of income tax.' He is saying: 'Take this meagre, piffling rise (in whatever form you like, but that's what I'm offering), and then I decide on your rate of income tax. If you don't agree, the consequence will be as follows.' This approach is quite a different thing. The Chancellor and Commons remain as powerful as they ever were, in the face of the TUC, the IMF, the CBI and all the other bodies or interests which define or influence the terms in which they create policy. The fact that Mr Healey has set out some options does not mean that he has somehow surrendered. Not yet, anyway.

But it may be, as sources close to Annie's Bar put it, that he has been 'too clever by 3 per cent'. Watching Mr Len Murray on the television as the options were disclosed (I spent my time flitting between the TV and the thing itself – the TV was infinitely preferable), I thought I detected something akin to horror as the figures were mentioned. Mr Murray was not prepared to commit himself to any definite statement, but he took a dim view of the Chancellor's announcement of the negotiating terms. Since then, the reaction from the unions has been unenthusiastic, to say the least. For the first time in a year, there are serious avowals of discontent on the part of the union leaders. They are very much afraid that they will not be able to sell this one to their membership.

Once again, then, the figure of Mr Michael Foot begins to assume a large significance. If Mr Healey and Mr James Callaghan (who, I should have mentioned, is now Prime Minister) are to get anywhere with the unions, they need Mr Foot's support. And if they are to get his support, it has to be won now. In his address to the PLP, Mr Callaghan had intended to announce that his first act would be to reappoint both Mr Healey and Mr Foot to their former positions. He was able to secure Mr Healey's agreement on this, but not Mr Foot's. The latter argued that, before he agreed to continue in that particular job, he would have to see what the whole new cabinet was going to be. This was a good move, and indeed to have done otherwise would have been to surrender the bargaining position Mr Foot had acquired during the fight for the premiership. It appears, then, that Mr Foot has been fighting, and has succeeded in delaying (and perhaps influencing) Mr Callaghan's dispositions for the Government.

The death of Brian O'Malley has considerably restricted the field of choice, both for Mr Callaghan and for Mr Foot. O'Malley, although he was never a left-winger in the sense that, say, Mr Heffer is, belonged to the 'Centre-Left', and to the *Tribune* group. He was of working-class origins, and he was the only middle-ranking minister of the Left who could reasonably have been brought into the cabinet, to balance an influx of youngish Gaitskellites, without creating fury on the Right. Whether he would have succeeded to, say, Mrs Barbara Castle's job is a moot point, but it makes it that much more difficult to pension off Mrs Castle when the effect would be to lose two of the three key figures in the DHSS.

I'm not predicting anything (I tried to have a bet with Dr David Owen that he would be in the cabinet – but he blushed modestly and refused to rise to the bait). At least one of the leading left-wingers was talking in terms of a top job or nothing, and all the indications are that there has been some tough bargaining. The carefully leaked story that Mr Roy Jenkins had already been offered the EEC job by Mr Harold Wilson (after Mr Callaghan had refused to countenance Sir Christopher Soames) is one sign of what has been going on behind the scenes. The other sign is that although Mr Callaghan went out of his way to see both Mr Foot and Mr Healey on the morning before he became Prime Minister, he seems deliberately to have excluded the other heavyweight from his original visiting list. There is some sign that if the cabinet-making process has not gone as smoothly as initially planned, Mr Jenkins may have been the mouse that stopped the clock.

It is also worth bearing in mind that Mr Anthony Crosland is the one cabinet minister with whom Mr Callaghan has always got on well – he was Jim's designated successor after the Great Devaluation. If Mr Crosland were still the preferred choice for the Treasury (not now, but say in the New Year) everything would depend on keeping the Foreign Office free for Mr Healey. And one way of doing that would paradoxically be to appoint Mr Crosland to the Foreign Office now.

It is not only, however, a question of choosing a government. The Left will also be putting on the pressure for a new economic strategy, that is to say for the widespread introduction of import controls. Mr Healey said in his Budget speech that he was not necessarily against selective import controls. But the strategy of the Left involves far more than this. They believe that the controls are needed now, and that they are anyway inevitable; better to introduce them when they can be really effective. In the coming months, this argument is likely to become much sharper. Several MPs recall Mr Callaghan's pusillanimity over devaluation, and they gloomily predict that he will just not have the courage to act with appropriate speed and decision.

Is the parallel a fair one? Certainly Mr Callaghan dithered over devaluation, and according to one MP who was involved he did not even take the initiative in drawing up the contingency plan for which he has recently been credited. It was the Treasury, and Mr Robert Neild, who 'war-gamed' devaluation while Mr Callaghan and Mr Wilson stood out against it.

Mr Callaghan once said that there were only two kinds of chancellor – those who failed and those who got out in time. Perhaps there are also two kinds of prime minister. Mr Wilson got out in time. Mr Callaghan's position is hardly enviable.

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Roger Opie

Budget Making New Style

Budgets will never be the same again. Denis Healey, the undergraduate, was a revolutionary by persuasion. Now as Chancellor he has started one revolution and abandoned another. Keynesian demand-management is now officially dead. In place of the level of total spending, Mr Healey has made the distribution of incomes the centrepiece of economic policy. A tradition of 35 years' standing has been thrown overboard.

It was in 1941 that the Keynesian revolution produced its first Budget, different in style, content and objective from anything that had gone before. Keynes himself wrote the script of Sir Kingsley Wood's Budget of that year in which for the first time the balance between total government spending and total revenue was used to stabilise the economy. In every post-war Budget this Keynesian balancing act has been at the centre of the Chancellor's strategy. It was not sufficient or necessary to look at its effect on, say, the price of cigarettes or the level of death duties. What mattered was its fiscal stance – did the Budget add to or subtract from total private spending, and thus expand or contract the levels of demand, output and employment?

Mr Healey's Budget on Tuesday put an end to all that. It was the first of a revolutionary new style and focus of Budget. In its economic assumptions it is startling and exciting. No longer much concerned with the level of demand, output and employment, he focuses not on the real variables but on the monetary ones – wages and prices. This is an original extension of the old idea of a budgetary trade-off. In the process Mr Healey has rejected all the historic post-war Treasury trade-offs. The oldest and traditional Keynesian Budget was simply a trade-off between spending by the private sector and by the public sector. If the private sector wanted to buy more or less than the volume of output that would employ the whole work force, the Chancellor would alter the amount the public sector spent and the spending power he left in the pockets and purses of the private sector.

This 'spending trade-off' was soon turned upside down by the discovery that the great depression would never return; that total spending was always pretty high and sometimes too high. Excess demand, not deficient demand, was the ever-present problem. Instead of a spending trade-off we faced a 'savings trade-off', in the budgets of Stafford Cripps, Hugh Gaitskell, Selwyn Lloyd and Roy Jenkins, if the private sector wanted to save so little that not enough resources were released to produce armaments or exports, the Chancellor raised taxes to make the public sector do the saving that the private sector was unwilling to do.

For years this balancing act was the centrepiece of the Chancellor's performance. But success brought excess: full employment brought inflation. With the invention of the infamous Phillips curve, which suggested that there was a stable, automatic and close connection between the level of employment and the rate of wage increases, the Treasury invented the 'unemployment – inflation trade-off'. If this trade-off were on offer, then Keynesian analysis and policies certainly had no solution. A new weapon had to be invented called incomes policy. For many people the retreat from simple and sufficient Keynesian management of demand had begun.

When Mr Wilson went into Opposition in 1970, and Professor Kaldor therefore went back to Cambridge, a new trade-off was invented. Based on simply Keynesian identities, it was now argued that the balance of payments was an exact replica of the Government's financial balance. A deficit in the latter exactly matched, and indeed caused, a deficit in the former. A new trade-off of internal surplus versus external surplus, just as mechanical and rigid as the old Phillips trade-off, was invented.

Happily, both have collapsed as soon as

'The baptism of the eunuch', a painting by Rembrandt discovered hanging among family portraits. – News item.

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they were exploited. We have suffered both accelerating inflation and rising unemployment, and we have enjoyed more recently an increasing government deficit and a falling external deficit. Mr Healey, therefore, has made a new start. He has dropped any attempts, if he ever intended to make them, to achieve full or even high employment – his forecast for the end of the decade is for a rate of unemployment still half as high again as in the 1960s. He has abandoned his domestic balancing act as well. The level of demand will be determined by the level of exports, which will depend on the level of world demand, and he can do nothing about that. What he can do is to get out of the way – in other words to create and maintain the spare capacity, called respectively unemployed labour and new investment, so that the exports can actually be produced. Hence his Budget, even with a million and a half unemployed, is neutral. If demand, output and employment rise this year, it will not be his doing. Equally, he has rejected the New Cambridge and the monetarist orthodoxies. He omitted even to mention the so-called 'public sector borrowing requirement' until his last five minutes, just as though it hardly mattered, and he is right.

Instead Mr Healey has produced a pre-Keynesian Budget – taxes on tobacco, drink and driving and cuts in income taxes, but only enough to restore the balance between direct and indirect taxes distorted by inflation since his previous Budget. But he has also detonated a revolution. He now offers what could be the most exciting and rewarding trade-off in post-tax real take-home pay. It is not a trade-off between incomes and jobs, although that is a long-term threat, but a trade-off between the sources of real income. Real incomes will rise, either from lower wage-demands and hence slower inflation and lower taxes, or from higher wage-demands offset by higher prices, higher taxes and higher unemployment.

At a stroke, as one might say, he has inverted an old threat of the TUC in the days of Vic Feather. Then the TUC argued that if the Chancellor would not raise demand by more government spending, the trade unions would do so by increasing wages and consumer spending. It didn't work because as soon as prices rise in response to higher wages it can't work. Now Mr Healey offers precisely the opposite. If trade unionists will accept lower wage-settlements through their unions, he will top up their real incomes by tax-cuts, and back-dated ones at that. If trade unions will give up some of their merely apparent power to determine living standards, he will make it real. But in that trade-off they must also abandon their real power to determine the rate of inflation. He has therefore (and thereby) brought the whole issue of the distribution of income to the centre of the political stage where the shares must be finally settled, not step by step in an endless and self-defeating wage-wage spiral, intertwined with a self-destructive wage-price spiral, but in one place and at one time, so that everyone can see that one man's wage increase is another man's real wage cut.

The success of this gamble depends on whether the cost of living is pushed up in the next few months by further falls in sterling; whether union negotiators are willing to let slip their apparent power to determine real wages, in exchange for a real power to influence real incomes through the Budget; whether wage and salary earners are willing to have their incomes settled simultaneously and for up to a year ahead; and whether the process and the result seem fair. This last depends on the number and the details of tax rates and social benefits. There is no need to abandon, indeed there is every need to pursue, a socialist distribution of real incomes as the central part of Mr Healey's strategy.

Alexander Cockburn

Nixon Rules – OK?

We have reached that stage in the American political calendar for this year when you have to sprint to catch up with the truism of the day. Then, just as you draw abreast, the thing gets tagged as an outdated cliché and drops dead at your feet. At the precise moment I write the truism is that Jimmy Carter's 'momentum' – the season's most favoured political noun – has, despite his hair's-breadth victory over Mo Udall in Wisconsin, been slowed by the latter's surprisingly strong showing in New York, where he ran second behind 'Scoop' Jackson, winning many more delegates than Carter. Adjacent truisms are that Jackson himself did not do as well as he himself predicted, considering that New York with its large Jewish vote was 'his' state; that neither he nor Mo Udall conceivably can be expected to win the nomination; that the results of last Tuesday's primaries favour a deadlocked convention. In short – and here the political commentators invariably summon up their richest cadences – 'it is still very much an open race'.

All of which assertions contradict the truisms of the weekend, which I passed in Washington. Here trend-spotters and placemen cut through leisurely deliberation to assert emphatically that Carter would win the nomination as Democratic candidate and then quite possibly beat President Ford at the end of the year. Then with a glint in their eyes they would be off to observe, and even board, the bandwaggon as it trundled through town.

Such confident predictions were being made in rather bizarre circumstances. The weekend saw a climax in the renaissance of Watergate, in the form of the première of the film of *All the President's Men* and the publication of Messrs Woodward and Bernstein's fresh reportage on Nixon's final days. Their new book, with its portrayal of Nixon as allegedly drunken, mentally disturbed and suicidal in his terminal moments of power, has of course aroused a storm of abuse from Republican quarters. The abuse naturally has a political component. Erosion of Woodward and Bernstein's credibility in their latest disclosures might tend to erode their credibility in the past. Ergo, if you take the right logical short cuts, Nixon was the victim of a conspiracy. The liberal elite from Georgetown conspired to get their man and, say the more vociferous Republicans, there is no reason why the electorate should forget the fact next November.

Thus the ghost of Richard Nixon clanked around Washington, causing widespread discomfort. The film of *All The President's Men* contains television footage of Nixon's nomination as the Republican presidential candidate in Miami in 1972. The man offering him to the adoring throng was Gerald Ford. This historical conjunction, to be viewed by film-going voters over the next few months, is not particularly appreciated by Ford's political advisers, since it opens the sluices of memory to such detritus as the pardon – an event they would prefer to see forgotten amid 'the healing process'.

The splendid throng of liberal journalists and politicians at the première audibly enjoyed Ford's discomfiture. But the evocation of Nixon also left them with food for thought. The reason, after all, why the film came to be made and the book to be written was that Nixon skipped to power over the back of a loser in 1972. No one wants another McGovern around to lose 49 states to President Ford. And that is why, when these people assure you of Carter's impending triumph, they say with a slightly chilling emphasis: 'He's a winner.' It is also why you could hear some liberal foes of Carter remark that there is something frighteningly intense behind the religious love-talk for which the Carter campaign is noted, that conceivably a Democratic Nixon is on the march towards the imperial presidency.

In Washington, though, the emphasis was more on the winning, less on the menace. On all sides nostrils can be observed flaring at the possibility of a transfer of power as significant as that which occurred with the accession of President Kennedy in 1960. Camelot produced a population shift of Harvard academics and the like to Washington which remains – for them at least – a glorious, singular memory. Carter, scarcely taken seriously only two or three months ago, is the new beacon. Savvy young job-hunters in the liberal foundations, think-tanks and universities now proffer their

NEXT WEEK

Jeremy Bugler
The Left and the Environment

Profile of the Queen

Malcolm Muggeridge
Diary of a Deadbeat

Because of the Easter holiday, next week's issue of the NEW STATESMAN will go to press one day earlier than usual. It will be on sale in central London on Wednesday and elsewhere on Thursday morning.

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support and their resumés. Seasoned heavyweights such as Cyrus Vance – one of the sinews of the Democratic Establishment – weigh purposefully in with endorsements.

Such was the atmosphere to be detected in Washington, and with it went a certain contemptuous belittlement of Hubert Humphrey, running ever more energetically as an undeclared candidate. Already people are peering over the shoulder of a brokered convention in July and asking the simple question: 'Can Hubert really and truly win?' And the polls, at the moment, tell them that he would not beat Ford. The same polls are telling them that, as of this moment, Carter would.

The traveller returning from Washington to New York for the Tuesday primaries with such truisms in his pocket is forthwith confronted with a somewhat different set of propositions. Political time is marching at another pace: Carter, finally damaged by charges made in the press and on television over the past two months is – according to an awesome interrogatory apparatus called the *New York Times*-CBS poll – being perceived by a significant number of voters as 'fuzzy on the issues' and as 'less honest' than Udall. Even so, he still defeated Udall in a state where the latter campaigned extensively, which is notedly liberal and in which he spent four times as much money as Carter. (And, needless to add, a state in which he received the support of Hubert Humphrey, himself desperate to impede Carter's rapid advance.)

More than one might gather in Washington, liberals, as evidenced particularly in New York, are still prepared to hold the line against Carter, by the expedient of voting for someone they generally concede to be ultimately 'a loser' – namely, Udall. The question now outstanding is how long these reservations can reasonably be maintained. Plainly, Jackson's performance in New York has not added to his lustre. He failed to match his own predictions of a tremendous victory in a primary with only a 25 per cent turnout, of which many were those Jewish voters who are his most conspicuous supporters. The genial Udall has to show that he can do well in a large industrial state. So, indeed, does Carter. In two-and-a-half weeks' time just such a battlefield will be provided, in the form of the Pennsylvania primary. Here, once again, Hubert Humphrey and Governor Jerry Brown of California (who calls for 'planetary realism') will pray for a deadlock; and labour leaders will ponder whether they, ultimately, want Carter or Humphrey in the White House.

Towards the former lean such liberal unions as the United Auto Workers: to the latter the forces of George Meany in the AFL-CIO. One can shift the pieces about on the chess board in Pennsylvania, and in all the primaries thereafter. The issues will come and go, as with bussing in Massachusetts, the future of Israel in New York and support prices for milk producers in Wisconsin. But in a week in which Watergate is being revisited amid such clamour, it is not merely facile to stress that there is an enduring issue too; that the promise is not merely the package, that all politics are not, at some level, variants on the ruses of the exile in San Clemente.

New York

Christopher Roper

The Door Slams in Latin America

The military coup in Argentina on 24 March put an end to months of uncertainty created by the wildly erratic rule of Isabel Perón, who succeeded her husband in July 1974. The new military government is obviously concerned to avoid the international odium which has been Chile's lot during the past 30 months. It is not at all clear, however, whether the image of honest soldiers reluctantly clearing up the mess can be sustained for long. The minister appointed to put the economy to rights, José Alfredo Martínez de Hoz, is a leading industrialist with close connections with the United States. After going to school at Eton, 'Joe' went on to Harvard, where he became a close friend of David Rockefeller. The team of ministers he has assembled in the economic cabinet are all veterans of past right-wing Administrations and representative of landowning, banking and industrial interests. There is no way in which their policies can be implemented without iron control of the working population.

Already, the Government has created the necessary legal structure for the exercise of absolute power. All trade union and political rights have been suspended; a species of martial law has replaced ordinary justice; and the death penalty has been established for a wide variety of offences. The top army officers are said to understand that the Government requires political support if it is to rule effectively. They argue, probably correctly, that the ousted government was so unpopular that it should be possible to do substantially better. But there are few areas of agreement among the generals and admirals. The navy, as in most Latin American countries, is substantially to the Right of the army. The only civilian political forces ready to collaborate with the new Government represent the extreme Right. The choice of Martínez de Hoz as economic minister is clear evidence of this: he could not, by any stretch of the imagination be described as 'moderate', which is the characterisation the new Government is anxiously seeking.

The main evidence for the junta's moderation is that it has not broken relations with Cuba, nor included the Communist Party in a list of parties which have been banned. The communists, along with all other parties, have been suspended. This was an intelligent move, and has undoubtedly modified press reaction around the world.

The military will make much of the mess left by President Isabel Perón and her Administration – arguably the most corrupt and incompetent in recent Latin American history. But for most Argentinians the military bear a heavy share of the responsibility. The terrorisation of the population by the Triple-A and other right-wing murder squads over the past 20 months has only been possible as a result of the complicity, in some cases active participation, of the armed forces. Right-wing terror, which concentrated on dissident trade unionists, journalists, lawyers and politicians, made a democratic response to the misrule of Isabel Perón virtually impossible. In that sense, the coup happened months ago. There has been no rule of law in Argentina since the death of General Juan Perón in 1974. He was no saint, but at no time did he ever permit the open gangsterism which has characterised the rule of his widow.

The policies of Martínez de Hoz, which include reducing the public sector, cutting real wages, 'ending the proletarianisation of the middle classes', and opening the way to increased foreign investment, are not easily distinguished from those which have been applied in Brazil, Uruguay and Chile over the past few years. The Argentine coup, in fact, brings Buenos Aires into line with a continental trend.

Throughout the region, governments are having recourse to tougher, more repressive, policies designed to reduce wages and encourage foreign investment. The nationalist and populist trends of the early 1970s seem to have been halted in their tracks. The process began with the coup in Bolivia in August 1971. Colonel Hugo Banzer, with the almost overt support of the Brazilian government, overthrew the populist military regime of General Juan José Torres. In 1973, there was a coup in Uruguay which attracted little attention in the outside world as the elected President Juan Maria Bordaberry himself presided over the closure of Congress. The eyes of the world were on Chile, where the Popular Unity government of Salvador Allende was finally overthrown in September 1973. These developments acted as an encouragement to the Right and a warning to the Left in other Latin

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American countries. The newly installed President Juan Perón in Argentina asked his impatient left-wing supporters: 'Do you want them to do to me what they did to Salvador Allende in Chile?'

In Peru new plots were hatched by dispossessed oligarchs and their allies in the armed forces. The ailing President, General Juan Velasco Alvarado, was replaced in a bloodless coup last August. His successor, General Francisco Morales Bermudez, used the nationalist Left to mount his putsch, but subsequent months have seen the steady advance of the Right. This culminated last week with the President denouncing Marxist infiltration of the 'revolutionary government'. For the first time in more than five years, there are again substantial numbers of political prisoners, mostly trade unionists, in Lima's jails.

In Brazil, where many people had believed President Ernesto Geisel's promises that the regime was to be liberalised, events have confirmed the continental trend towards harsher repression. In the past two weeks alone, Geisel has used his arbitrary powers to deprive three members of Congress of their seats and their political rights. The hardliners in the army, who opposed Geisel's candidacy three years ago, are now solidly aligned behind the President, who has not reduced their powers in any significant respect.

Many people in this country comfort themselves with the belief that Chile is somehow exceptional, and can be treated as a special case for international censure. But there is little difference in terms of the institutional powers wielded by the generals in Argentina, Brazil, Peru or Uruguay.

The political climate of the continent has changed so drastically that there has been scarcely a murmur of protest against the veiled threats of new aggressive action against Cuba which have been heard in Washington during the past two weeks. In fact, Cuba is again almost as isolated within Latin America as it was in 1967. There was a plan to hold a Latin American summit conference in Panama this year to commemorate the 150th anniversary of Bolivar's abortive Pan-American Congress. The meeting was to have included President Dorticos of Cuba and to have demonstrated a new spirit of Latin American unity in the face of the US. It has been quietly shelved.

Naomi Shepherd

Israel's Other Arab Problem

When rioters in half a dozen Arab villages in Israel last week attacked soldiers and policemen six Arabs died and long-dormant fears and suspicions on both sides were reborn. After 28 years of Arab passivity maintained through three wars, Jews were shocked by the display of hatred, and Arab Israelis by the force used against the rioters. Was this the beginning of a nationalist uprising or a protest against the backwardness of the Arab villages and towns, the inequality of opportunity for the new generation of educated Arabs? Was it the result of incitement by the Rakah Communists who had called a strike of the whole Arab community against the expropriation of Arab-owned land in the Galilee or the result of Israeli policy on the land issue? There were no simple answers to these questions in Israel this week.

Said a young Arab journalist employed by an Israeli newspaper: 'The call of Palestinian nationalism has been much stronger since the Yom Kippur war; whether Israeli Arabs remain loyal depends on Israeli policy towards them.' Contact with the Palestinians of the West Bank has shown many Israeli Arabs that material prosperity was no substitute for the lack of political self-expression, and that a wholly Arab society offered more opportunities to university graduates, who number nearly 5,000 in Israel today and only a handful of whom are employed in the Jewish sector. Some 38 per cent of Arabs today vote Rakah, including 65 per cent of the 40,000 young people in the Arab community who voted for the first time in 1973. Thus most of those born and educated in Israel support the party which challenges Zionism and the basic principles of the Jewish state.

Muhammed Wattad, Arab writer and teacher, says: 'The Establishment and Rakah have come to blows at the expense of the majority of Israeli Arabs. The land issue wasn't the main reason for the riots. If it hadn't been that it might have been education.' But Rakah had chosen to touch the rawest nerve of all. The Establishment, fearful of the implications of rising Arab nationalism in the underpopulated Galilee, where the narrow Jewish majority dwindles yearly, rushed through a long-postponed and much whittled-down expropriation scheme which involved taking 1,500 acres from the already hard-pressed and overcrowded Arab villages. The landowners were offered, and most accepted, alternative land, and part of the development plan was to benefit Arabs. But this explanation came too late. Faced with the unprecedented challenge of an Arab strike, police forces massed in Nazareth, the Rakah stronghold.

During the week before the strike a meeting of the heads of all Arab local councils had voted by secret ballot (for fear of Rakah pressures) against participation in the strike. In the event some 35 per cent of Arab workers stayed home. Some were caught between Rakah threats and the fear of losing their jobs, as many Jewish employers, including the Haifa Labour Council, threatened them with dismissal. The stage was set for deadlock but the degree of violence released had not been predicted. Today the heads of some Arab villages argue that it was all a tragic mistake. Massad Kassis of Mil'ya: 'The police and the army shouldn't have been sent in'. Yet in Nazareth, where the main force was concentrated, there were ugly scenes but no bloodshed. Three of the killings occurred when mobs armed with knives and farm tools attacked isolated army vehicles and patrols.

That the violence was not primarily connected with the land issue, as Wattad and others maintain, is borne out by the fact that of the seven villages involved in the riots only one – Kfar Kanna – was affected by the expropriations. The three villages where the worst violence occurred had a long-standing feud with the army, which uses part of their land for manoeuvres. Tira, where rioters attacked a lone police car and set fire to it with the policemen inside, is remote from the Galilee and one of the more prosperous villages, the producer of choice strawberries. An Arab contractor there commented: 'When your belly's full you have time to listen to your heart. The young men here study, finish school and then can't find the jobs they want.' But the rioters in one village had shouted PLO slogans: 'We are all Fatah: this isn't Israel, go away – this is Palestine.'

The nationalist propaganda from Rakah is obviously an invitation to violence but Rakah leaders have been careful not to provide evidence of clear subversion. Many Arab moderates protest against its legal status: 'If Nasser and Hussein could outlaw the communists, why can't the Israelis?' asked a moderate villager. 'The Israelis take loyalty for granted and reward the disloyal.' But the Israeli Government last week refused to outlaw the party. Security forces prefer to keep potential subversives in sight. And Israel does not want to bait Moscow.

Not only Arabs but many Israelis blame official policy for the Arab predicament: not only the tolerance of corruption among an earlier generation of Arab leaders who supported the Jewish parties but the fact that Israel accepts Arab social defection and backwardness as a fact of life. Said one high government official: 'Fourteen per cent of the GNP is produced by the Arab sector yet they pay only 1.5 per cent of the taxes. I know they don't get equivalent services as a result, but why not enforce collection in their own interest? Because of the expropriation issue, too, we've turned a blind eye to the complete defiance of building regulations in every Arab village.'

Last week the Minister of Police, while defending police action, urged more government jobs for Arab graduates; the head of the Histadrut Yeruham Meshel condemned those employers who had threatened Arabs with dismissal. But the really painful questions have yet to be answered: how necessary to the Israeli economy is the Arab work force which commutes daily out of the Arab villages? Who is to finance proposed industry in the Arab villages? Can Jewish employers be persuaded to take in Arab graduates? Do the two communities really want a closer relationship? Above all, is there a better future for the Arab minority in the Jewish state while the Israel-Arab conflict persists? Meanwhile, Rakah has called a mass May Day demonstration against the land plans.

Jerusalem.

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Kevin Rafferty*

A Crust for Bangladesh?

Dacca, Bangladesh, the world's poorest and most overcrowded society: all tomorrow's nightmares of some gloomy futuristic state, population, poverty, hunger, meet here today. A hugger-mugger of shanties spills all over the capital. Some people, not rich enough to have even a part-claim to a bit of shanty, lie down in a rough loincloth or flimsy strip of sari, and that is their home. Dacca is a hurly-burly city of excitable people and excitable traffic, of jingling cycle rickshaws painted with romantic pictures of lovely love and victory in war and fantastic flights to faraway places in Technicolored contrast to the squalor all around, of buses that bounce over the potholes and anything in their way but fail to shake off the free riders clinging to sides and top, of pedestrians everywhere, jostling with the traffic and one another. A teeming shabbiness spreads into every nook and cranny.

But not into the cantonment. The military police strictly control entry. In a far corner, in peace and quiet, sits Ziaur Rahman, the very model of a modern major-general. In his guarded spot the main noise is the smart stamping of sentries. Everything is neat and military spick and span. From time to time General Zia drives from the cantonment to the Secretariat, sitting in the front passenger seat of his two-star Land Rover, which carves a brisk 30 or 40 miles an hour through the mean streets. He is attended by armed outriders, but there is no stopping for the applause of the crowd. General Zia has a job to do.

Major-General Zia is one of three deputy chief martial law administrators and he is the strong man of the new Government. His isolation from the people does not seem an auspicious start to the new regime, but much has changed since the days of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and much of it for the better. In Mujib's brief reign the ruling figures behaved like circus performers in squalid Dacca, with the Sheikh himself often playing the role of clown rather than that of ringmaster, while the country was buffeted by natural disasters and cruel changes in world economic conditions. As a result, more than four years after their bloody struggle for independence, the Bangladeshis are poorer even than in poverty-stricken 1970.

Dacca is still a slum and the people still queue at the gates of the Catholic college to fight with the crows and the dogs for the scraps of leftovers, but under the military rulers there is an air of a battle to be fought. Instead of dreaming of a golden Bengal of the future the Administration is trying to create a liveable Bengal for those alive today. Military discipline is the order of the day. The streets are safe at night. Decisions are being taken. Thanks to a good harvest and curbs on smuggling, prices have come down and food is available.

General Zia is himself a likeable man of 40. He went straight from school into the Pakistan Army and rose to the rank of major. So much in him evidently springs from his Pakistan training. Close friends say that even today he is proud of the fact that his regiment was the only Pakistan Army unit that succeeded in driving into India on the Khem Kharan sector during the 1965 war. When he went for a short stay with the British Army of the Rhine, Zia is said to have been unhappy that it was not as smart as he had expected. But he also has the most impeccable Bangladeshi qualifications. While most of the politicians (except Sheikh Mujib and Dr Kamal Hussein) in 1971 were fleeing for their lives, Major Zia rebelled, seized the Chittagong radio station, and declared independence, the first open signal that Bangladesh had risen against its Pakistani masters. No one breathes any suspicion of corruption about Zia. His only known weaknesses are for cigarettes, chocolate and an efficient army.

I went to Dacca with many reservations. For all his faults, Sheikh Mujib was a popularly elected leader, a brilliant politician, a likeable man in a roguish way, with a personal magnetism that could mobilise the nation. He had a great love for his country even if in the end he did much to destroy it by playing politics and indulging in nepotism. On the other hand, military governments in the Third World have shown their readiness to trample on their own people to ensure stability and further their personal interests. Yet in Bangladesh one cannot help applauding the martial law government, and most Western commentators frankly hope that Zia will not hand over again to the corrupt politicians.

Until now the General has not put a foot wrong, although it might have been a different story if the weather had not been kind or if Sheikh Mujib had not belatedly instituted some necessary economic measures like the curbing of credit. And so far he has not shown that appetite for power which distinguishes most military strong men. Yet there is so much to do and so many people to depend upon. Can Zia keep together an army which was broken into many conflicting fragments and personalities when he took over? The infantry was at odds with the artillery and armour; there was rivalry between one regiment and another, one cantonment and another, as well as the conflicting ambitions of local commanders. On top of all that there was a budding revolutionary struggle between some younger officers pushing a new concept of a 'people's army' against the existing traditional British-style army of officers and men. For the moment Zia seems to have restored order.

Another question is whether Mrs Gandhi's India will refrain from interfering. India denies any such intentions, but on the border Bangladeshis and non-Bangladeshis alike believe that India is giving a helping hand to rebels. New Delhi is at least not being very helpful in its public pronouncements. Mrs Gandhi is understandably upset that Sheikh Mujib was killed and that anti-Indian things have been said in Dacca. But the Indians may be deceived in mistaking anti-Indian feeling (of which there is a lot in Dacca) for anti-Hindu communal trouble (of which there is little). General Zia has undoubtedly shown inexperience in his diplomacy. But he is India's best man in Dacca. He is not of the Pakistan school which sees an answer in putting the clock back and forming a federated Pakistan.

The biggest question, however, is whether General Zia will measure up to the job of developing Bangladesh. He is middle class by upbringing and by inclination probably has a military intolerance of the slow pace of democratically bringing change to the countryside. Meanwhile he stands in the way of the chaos and greed that a return of the old politicians would represent. He has also shown a willingness to initiate change, as his *Shanivar* (self-reliance) programme shows. But what is needed is a new way of replacing the old corrupted elites who have run the country for so long, but so far neither Westminster-style democracy nor communist-style systems practised in the Third World have given the poor of the poor countries any voice in their own welfare or stake in their future. The rich world has hardly helped.

Bangladesh's future will greatly depend on the generosity of the West and here is the biggest question mark of all. Bangladesh is without doubt the poorest country in the world today. Per capita income is about $50 a head a year. The population of 80 million is crowded into a land the size of England and Wales – a land subject to flooding, drought and natural disasters of a size never imagined in Europe. By the year 2000 there will be 150 million people in Bangladesh. About half the population have a deficiency in calorie intake and more than 80 per cent have a deficiency in vitamins. Consumption of rice and wheat has fallen in absolute terms and consumption of cloth provides for a simple loincloth a year per person. Fewer than 20 per cent of the people are literate.

So far there is no sign that the 'have' nations are interested in Bangladesh's appalling plight. The EEC refused to allow free imports of jute goods. France and Belgium fought bitterly to preserve a few hundred jobs in their jute industries, which are in decline anyway. Yet jute is the lifeblood of Bangladesh. The Soviet Union is worse than the West. Many of the hundreds of Russian experts in Bangladesh during Sheikh Mujib's days were there for political reasons. The Eastern bloc has been giving as aid (which must be repaid with interest) goods which it could not sell elsewhere. If Bangladesh is to survive, it needs money to pay for its imports, it needs secure supplies of food, fertilisers and oil; it needs technical experts to help train its people. General Zia may be able to give his country a period of stability on which to build – but only if the West, belatedly, shoulders its responsibilities.

*Asia Correspondent of the Financial Times.

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Richard Kershaw

Their Men from Havana

It would be comfortable to be able to dismiss the current excitation of Western foreign offices, parliaments and press over the Soviet-cum-Cuban success in establishing a military presence in Southern Africa, as yet another symptom in the Solzhenitsyn syndrome – that beast-beating at spineless abandonment of Western positions in the face of the communist juggernaut (etc.) which has struck such a chord of alarm in the conservative consciousness. It would also be easy to explain the concern as primarily a spin-off from the American electoral scene as the candidates for the presidency (in a United States genuinely humiliated by the failure of the side it backed in Angola) exchange minatory accusations about American weakness in facing up to communism in the world.

Both would be dangerously facile. The West has now reached the parting of the ways over the approach to what is happening in Southern Africa. In the happy era of 'Lancaster House decolonisation' we could disengage from our authority positions and responsibilities with a sense of self-righteous fulfilment (well, maybe they *were* poor, but still we'd left them a good civil service and the best system to get on with things, hadn't we?). The collapse of Portuguese dictatorship, and the consequential and precipitate Portuguese scramble out of Africa, changed all that. Suddenly we were down to the uncomfortable toe of Africa.

To some, the Last Bastion which would inexorably fall (after all, the map hangs North-South, and the pressure downwards of 'freedom' seemed naturally visceral); but conveniently not-yet-for-a-while because there were kith-and-kin, and investments, and it was damn difficult to think what to do about it all. To others, it was clear the Russians *were* coming. It was too inviting, this capitalist haven in which the classes were actually painted different colours like a Marxist demonstration day-dream; and in which Western investment and involvement were so massive that it would prove Lenin's thesis about capitalism's dependence on exported capital and its compulsion to fight to protect it.

Now the Portuguese have gone. The group which part won, part walked into, the vacated colony of Mozambique has a much more sophisticated revolutionary theory than those few who actually won earlier anti-colonial wars in Africa rather than getting their independence on a plate (handed to a pre-chosen leadership). In Angola, where the stakes were higher, the West went so far as to back the wrong (in the sense of the defeatable) camp, and compounded it by apparent alliance with South Africa itself. For years Britain and the West have seemed to be caught on the horns of a dilemma over what to do about white Southern Africa. Now the bifurcation is complete, and soon it may be dilemma no more.

My contention is that there are two fallacies which complicate British public and official thinking about Africa, and particularly Southern Africa. The first is strategic: the 'defence of the Cape sea route' was for a long time the ultimate justification for an essentially supportive stance towards South Africa. The argument went thus: free movement of trade, particularly in oil with the Suez Canal for so long closed (and permantly unreliable if reopened), depended for the West's survival on a clement power controlling the Cape. Whether Afrikaner Nationalist governments were likeable or not, at least they were in this context indubitably pro-West. Accelerated encouragement of black majority rule in Southern Africa could mean the end of 'friendly' control of a vital lifeline.

The public demonstration of the case was visually simple. Lines from the oilfields of the Middle East and the great markets of the Orient would converge towards the Cape of Good Hope before dividing out again towards the hungry refineries and factories of Europe and the Western Hemisphere. It was obvious, wasn't it? At the Cape the band was unified, thick and cuttable. The Cape route was a jugular, an aorta, which could be 'severed'. Meanwhile, to the north, Chinese flags could be pinned to Dar-es-Salaam and Brazzaville, Russian flags to Somalia and perhaps Conakry. A Chinese snake would wind down into Central Africa (the Tan-Zam rail link being built by proselytising men from Peking). It was scary enough to make one rush out to fill up the petrol tank in London, or thank God (*sotto voce*) for Johannes Balthazar Vorster. To point out that by the time Russian killer submarines were sinking supertankers off the Cape of Good Hope we'd be in a nuclear shooting war, was dismissed as strategic illiteracy. And to suggest that arrangements for bunkering were conceivable at a pinch without Durban and Cape Town was regarded as almost communist propaganda.

Lest this argument imply readiness to see the hammer and sickle flying over Simonstown or Richard's Bay, I hasten to shudder at that appalling prospect. My purpose is to suggest that the strategic fallacy which offers South Africa as an essential ally under its current system of government may be the strongest factor on the communists' side, because it clouds other judgments and policies. Which brings me to the second widely held belief which I propose is fallacious – that the communist bloc has done, and is doing, very well in Africa. It hasn't and isn't – or is only just starting to do so.

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And that primarily because of what is happening in the south of the continent.

There are of course still those to whom the replacement of the imperial *Pax Britannica* by indigenous rule has meant, not a change in the power relationships between the West and the Third World, but surrender to international communism. They have much superficial evidence – overt communist-bloc attempts to subvert, and sometimes to buy, new-nation leaderships; the supply of weapons and instruction to national liberation movements; a usually similar voting pattern in international organisations; above all, the language which Third World leaders use to describe their position is commonly drawn from the clichés of revolutionary Marxism. And a squeeze on foreign capital by fiscal or nationalisation pressures occurs in most countries open to unrestricted Western investment before independence.

But the evidence on the other side is just as strong. It may be more difficult to argue the case, say, to the board of RTZ, which sees by direct experience the fall in standards of efficiency of management, of labour control, and of public probity in many new nations. But to Western social democrats the evidence that Africa is not 'going communist' should be compelling. The struggle towards dignity and identity is matched by the need to redistribute wealth – something which is hardly alien to the thinking of the Labour Party. More important, there is the immediate perception that internal redistribution (often carried out dishonestly among the new elite) is comparatively meaningless until there is major international redistribution, something which is much more alien to Labour Party thought after the manifesto has been written and forgotten. The language of international redistribution – of the New Economic Order, of the Group of 77 – can again sound as if the Third World countries of Africa are lining up with the communist bloc. But they are not.

What is the evidence? Africa has resisted becoming a sphere of influence, in the classic sense, for the Russians or Chinese. Yes, there have been Russian bases in Egypt and Somalia. There was strong Chinese influence in Mali at one time, earlier in Guiné and Ghana and Brazzaville. But what in general has happened? Ghana threw out the Russians and Chinese when Nkrumah went. Sekou Touré in Conakry showed strong resistance when it looked as if his country was getting near to satellite status – he chucked out the Russian embassy. Egypt made its break with Russia very publicly and recently. When the Biafran war was on the Russians gave MiGs and other weapons to the Nigerians, but their main partner was the British. In Zaïre, the Gbenyiste-Muleliste rebellion did involve major communist help, but it was suppressed (with major Western assistance.)

To many people, Tanzania was the test case even before Angola. The watchers of the Chinese in Africa were determined to prove that President Nyerere's country was coming under Peking's influence, just as Zanzibar had come under East German influence before the union. I remember Nyerere once saying to me: 'Why do they protest so much? I have a few Chinese in-

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structors, but the West Germans, Canadians, British and Israelis are also helping train our forces and police.' As the Frelimo push into Mozambique grew, initially under Algerian training, the number of Chinese instructors in Tanzania also grew. They have become more involved in Rhodesian guerrilla training. Then there was the Tan-Zam railroad.

Yet the truth on the other side is that Tanzania has gone its own way, following its own brand of political egalitarianism set out in the Arusha Declaration a decade ago. The fact that communist arms and help may have come into the liberation movements through Dar-es-Salaam is a function of the lack of any other supplier as much as preference for the source – people like Nyerere don't *expect* the West to arm guerrillas (although, breathe it not too loud, there are those in the liberation movements who look back almost wistfully to the days when the CIA in its anti-Dullesian 'liberal' mood distributed funds to socialist freedom movements).

The tendency in Africa has not been towards Stalinoid communism or Chinese permanent revolution, but towards military dictatorships as the post-colonial structures have proved inadequate to satisfy and contain the disappointed aspirations of both people and elite. Trade continues to be with the West, by vast predominance. Most of Africa is linked with the Common Market through the Lomé Convention. There are more Western businessmen, technical assistants, voluntary workers and doctors in Africa than communist bloc ones by a factor of several times. That leaves out the oil companies and multinationals.

Which brings us back to Southern Africa. There the ideological conflict is so much more sharpened that, with the end of the Portuguese buffer-colonies, the choice facing the West has become stark. Mr Vorster has realised this, and launched a far more radical change in South African policy than most anti-South Africans recognise – he has twitched if not pulled the rug from under Ian Smith; he may yet talk turkey over South West Africa; he has negotiated directly with Kaunda, and through him with Machel and Nyerere; and he will launch his Bantustans as independent nations (fraudulent though that independence will be) if he is able and allowed to do so.

There are those who disagree. Daniel Patrick Moynihan said to me a few days ago: 'I know your view . . . that the Soviets have never been successful in establishing regimes in Third World countries, and so far they haven't. But may I say something? – they never had the Ghurkas alongside. The Cubans are the Ghurkas of this new empire. They are in five countries in West Africa . . . you have a European army, the blue-eyes are back, and they are killing blacks. Now, how did *that* happen, after a century?'

True. But one can pit a judgment against Moyhnihan – that the Caribbean Ghurkas will leave too, not because we want them to, but because Africans will. Unless we allow a race war between blacks and whites to develop like Armageddon in the toe of Africa. And unless we identify with one side (which, let's face it, will be natural) under the impression that we are resisting the Red tide.

In the Spring number of **OUT NOW!**

Universities Quarterly

CULTURE, EDUCATION & SOCIETY

MUTUALLY NECESSARY F. R. Leavis

'Dr Michael Tanner has struck me as having been very forbearing, and more than that, surprisingly generous. . . . I myself have known at close range two persons to whom I confidently imputed genius, and I judge that that word is not attachable to me. One of the two was Wittgenstein. And actually I haven't been so outrageously arrogant in my references to him as my prose style, together with the improvised mode of argument that went with it, allowed Tanner to suppose.'

FROM MODERN MASTERY TO DECADENCE Roger Poole

'. . . through the fabric of the Modern Masters, the dominant note is fear. There is fear of the theoretical as such, fear of abstraction, fear of ideas. There is implicit hostility to anything that doesn't fit neatly into the main tradition of Anglo-Saxon empiricism and positivism . . . this cavilling sophistical verbalism.'

THE TECHNOLOGICAL THREAT? Patrick Corbett

'How can we prevent the trivialization of humanistic work by its academic setting? . . . What is it *in practice* that we humanists have to give to this technological world? How *in practice* can we fit ourselves to do so? Anything less than that is verbiage.'

THE EDUCATION OF VICE-CHANCELLORS Maurice Peston

'Higher education is expensive. Administrators and teachers in universities and polytechnics are spoilt, and some of them are arrogant to boot. University professors and vice-chancellors are great criers of woe.'

FREUD AND ART Anthony Storr

'The idea that Freud's effect upon the world has depended as much upon his clarity, his stylistic excellence, and his aesthetic gift as upon the scientific validity of his theories would have been anathema to him.'

THE CONSCIENCE OF THE SOCIAL SCIENTIST Reuben Bitensky

'In his own mind the social scientist attributes his failure to the fact that the greater the social problem confronting him — the more variables involved — the more complex are the demands upon methodology. Honing methodologies become a modus vivendi, for there is nothing else left to do.'

'THOUGHTS IN THEIR DUMB CRADLES' Michael Black

'It is reductive to say that Baudelaire is a fetishist, with commonplace fantasies memorably expressed . . . his linguistic means put us back in touch with the native movements of the silent mind.'

THE REWARDS OF RESEARCH Richard Startup, Michael M. Gruneberg

'We simply do not know how far academics are intrinsically interested in undertaking research as against, say, their natural interest in being promoted. Are academics convinced that they are working in frontier territory, and are they satisfied with their ability to extend frontiers?'

PORNOGRAPHY AND VIOLENCE: MUCH ADO ABOUT SOMETHING E. J. Mishan

'Along an ever-expanding infinitely flexible multi-dimensional spectrum a place can be found for everything — including, of course, used toilet paper and filmed scenes of bestiality. Such a conception of art lends itself admirably to licentious impresarios and monomaniac authors and artists.'

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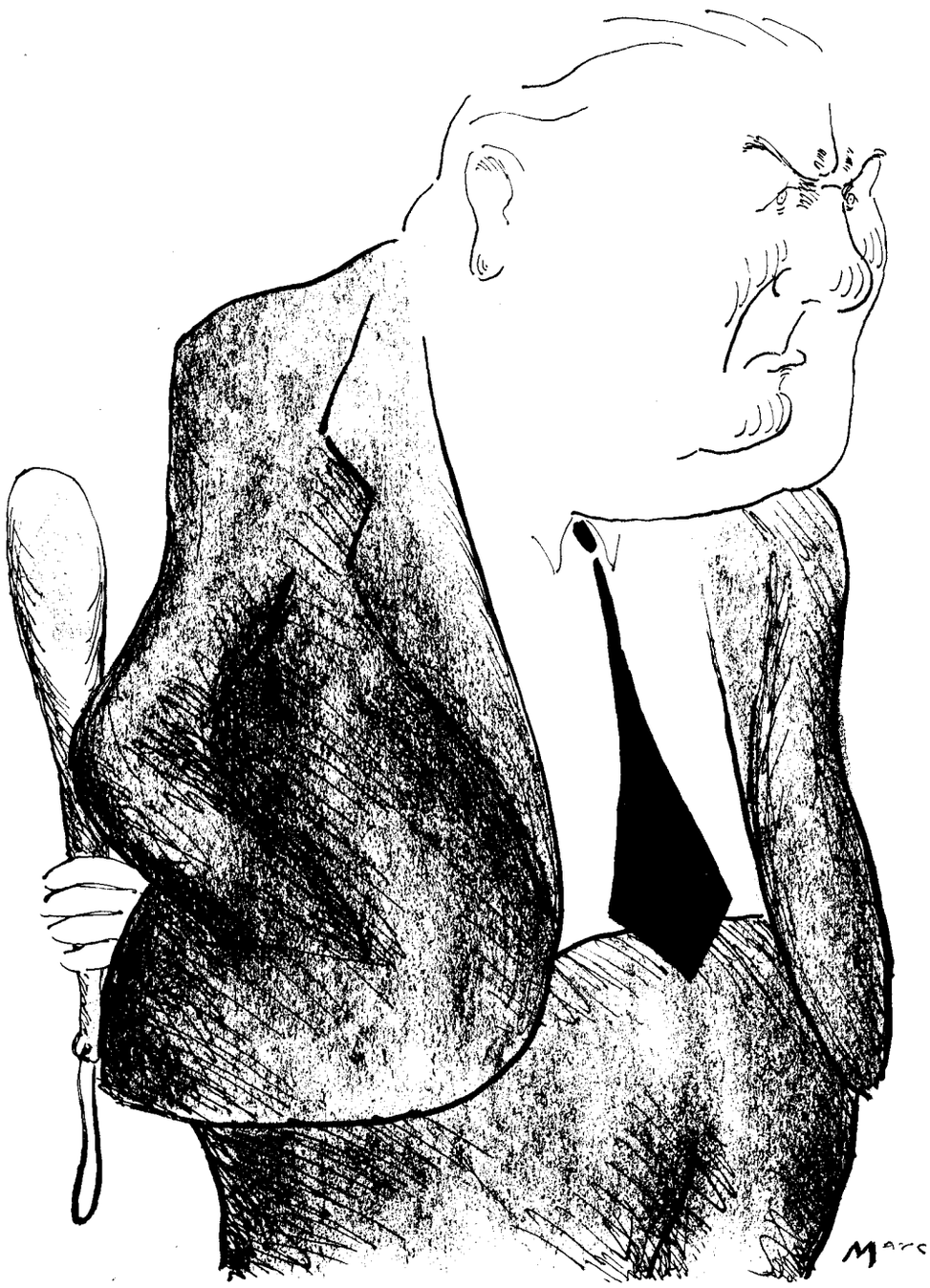
Profile: The Prime Minister

Lucky Jim

Only once in the past three weeks did James Callaghan's faith that he would ultimately become Prime Minister waver. That moment occurred on the night of the first ballot a fortnight ago when the Callaghan forces gathered glumly with their candidate in the Foreign Secretary's room in the House of Commons. The figures were only marginally worse than the more pessimistic of them had forecast but they still seemed full of threat and menace. Even a cursory study of them suggested that the contest might well now go to four ballots – and that in itself was not good news for Mr Callaghan: worse, at some moment the Jenkins/Healey vote seemed bound to coalesce under the one standard-bearer or the other – and already it came to two more than Mr Callaghan's own first ballot total. 'It gradually dawned on all of us,' recalls one of those there, 'that we could lose after all.'

Despondency dwelt among them for about 20 minutes. It was broken by a knock on the door. In came the diminutive figure of Dr J. Dickson Mabon, somewhat breathlessly bearing the news that his own champion, Roy Jenkins, had decided to quit the tournament. No one in the room was in any doubt what that meant: it might take some time – but their man was home and dry. 'From that moment on,' says one of the new Prime Minister's closest advisers, 'I think Jim started forming his cabinet. He knew he didn't have to worry any more.'



In its way perhaps that indicates as well as anything the kind of politician James Callaghan is. He not only knows about counting votes; he knows (to borrow a Texan phrase) 'where the bones are buried'. If he had been born an American nothing could have stopped him from becoming if not a senator (as he himself has often said he would like to have been) then at least mayor of some great city. Indeed, on the radio on the morning of the day he went to the Palace to collect the Queen's Commission, the echo was almost uncannily of Mayor Daley of Chicago. Unwittingly and unconsciously his elderly neighbours at Ringmer in Sussex gave the whole show away. 'When he first came down here,' said 78-year-old George Miller, 'he told us that if we ever wanted any help or advice, or got into any form of trouble, we should go straight to him – he's that type.' Which, being translated, is the classic definition of the role of the 'ward heeler' or 'precinct captain' of American politics.

And that, or so his critics would allege, is also the way in which he built up his power base over the years within the PLP. The individuals who ran his campaign during the last three weeks were not outstandingly able or talented in the normal parliamentary sense: they were, however, not only dependable but also, so far as James Callaghan is concerned, *dependent* as well. No man, indeed, has ever been better at looking after his 'friends' within the parliamentary party – they may not have been high-flyers but they all somehow were rewarded with a niche at tactically sited places in the middle rank of government. In fact, 'friends' is one of his favourite words. When Joan Lestor found herself moved, rather against her will, from the Foreign Office to the Department of Education last summer she had the temerity to go and ask the Foreign Secretary why he wanted to get rid of her. He was not at all affronted by the question. He simply said: 'You see, my dear, my trouble is I like to have people around me who are *friends* of mine.'

The comfortable aura that he exudes is thus merely the reflection of a need for reassurance within - and that may well be the explanation for something that disturbs not only his critics but dismays even some of those who are closest to him: the fact that he has got to Number 10 on the basis of appealing, above all, to mediocrities within the PLP. Not that Callaghan is a mediocrity himself: if he had never left the tax job in which his mother first placed him, his sheer native ability (some might call it cunning) would probably have seen to it that he ended up running the whole of the Inland Revenue. As it is, he is almost certainly the last top-flight politician we shall see in Britain who, having being born too early to be scooped up by an expanding educational system, wholly escapes the taint of being a meritocrat.

That, of course, is an electoral strength, especially for a Labour leader. And it is one that the Labour movement can expect Jim Callaghan mercilessly to exploit, especially in relation to the now totally middle-class assimilated Margaret Thatcher (with whom, healthily, he does not get on at all). But it also probably explains the

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very considerable element of Alf Garnett in him. Even today there are those who suspect that his refusal to take Mrs Thatcher seriously has not a little to do with fundamental male chauvinist prejudice.

Quite enough, though, has been written about his past and his antecedents. What matters now is the kind of Prime Minister he will make. Last Monday afternoon, while still waiting not merely for the summons from the Palace but also for the formal verdict of the PLP, there were certainly no shaking hands or quivering lips. His speech that evening to the PLP – double-spaced-typed on House of Commons notepaper – was something he was already lovingly fondling: the text of his broadcast to the nation ('flesh of our flesh') later that evening was just having the final touches put to it. But the modesty also was still there – 'You know,' he kept saying, 'I've been very lucky.'

And so, indeed, he has. Hard now to recall that less than three years ago he was prepared to throw up his whole future in British politics to go into exile and become managing director of the International Monetary Fund in Washington. The memory of that incident now seems to embarrass him – and he contrives to give the impression that the whole thing and everything connected with it is lost in the mists of time. 'I'm not sure what my feeling about the party was at that stage' – and though it is quite clear that his restiveness was to do with not being in government, his own formulation is at once both interesting and revealing. For to James Callaghan – and this is where his critics (and even his Tory admirers) get him wrong – it is the party that ultimately counts. Of all the lines written about him in the past three weeks, the only one that really got through to him was that in the *Sunday Times* profile which said that, to him, being leader of the Labour Party was every bit as important as being Prime Minister.

Whenever it came, say, to a by-election speaking engagement at a weekend – and there were family protests – it was always James Callaghan who said: 'Now, wait a moment, don't forget that but for the Labour Party we wouldn't even be here.' It is not only the new Prime Minister, but those who have been in the best position to know him down the years, who reject out of hand that he could ever have rebuked anyone (least of all as long ago as 1964) for calling him 'Jim' – and then adding the injunction 'Mr Chancellor, if you please'.

That is simply not his style, though with journalists he may well turn out to be a good deal less familiar and 'matey' than Harold Wilson at least initially was. The real doubts about him, however, go a good deal deeper than that. Within the 'broad church' of the Labour Party he has always been on the authoritarian, not to say disciplinarian, side; in 1955, for example, few Labour MPs (and certainly none in his then age group) were more determined, or more active, in trying to get Nye Bevan expelled than he was. And his own rebellions against the party line, as has been chronicled elsewhere, were so minimal as to be almost invisible. All that may well be ancient history and, no doubt, should be left as such were it not for one obvious risk. Whatever authoritarian instincts Jim Callaghan possesses now have a chance of being projected on to a much broader screen. They are unlikely to come out, as to some extent they did with Wilson, in an undue reliance on that conformist citadel, the civil service: his three years at the Treasury have probably provided an insurance against that. Nor are they likely to be reflected in an exaggerated deference towards institutions (except perhaps the police): it was, after all, Harold Wilson who 12 years ago changed into a black jacket and striped pants to go to the Palace – James Callaghan went this week in a lounge suit and a marginally adventurous tie. No, the danger with him is at once more insidious and intimidating. It is that he will use his own version of populism as an instrument for the restriction of personal choice and the repression of individual freedom. In which case he will certainly enjoy the applause of Mrs Whitehouse and perhaps even the envy of Mrs Thatcher.

Before, however, he embarks on turning his own attitudes into those of the Labour Party he should perhaps reflect on one thing: that, despite the wave of satisfaction that swept Middle America in 1968 at the sound of police night-sticks smacking juvenile and unorthodox heads during that year's Chicago convention, the Democrats still managed to lose the election. In the end political parties have to be true to themselves. And it might be no bad thing if the following words were to find some place in Mr Callaghan's Downing Street:

> Often in the eyes of Labour's opponents the test of a Labour leader's courage has been how resolute he may be in resisting the demands of his followers. The accolade of statesmanship is conferred on those who abandon their policies to seek continuity with those of their opponents. This is one of the curiosities of politics which adds to the perils confronting a new Labour Prime Minister.

They were written, more than a decade ago, by Michael Foot.

Peter Kellner

Anatomy of the Vote

Despite the confident predictions from the lobby, a lot of things didn't happen during the Labour leadership contest. Roy Jenkins didn't come close to Michael Foot and James Callaghan on the first ballot: Denis Healey didn't get a bandwagon going: Tony Benn didn't get humiliated. But what exactly *did* happen – and why? The overall figures have determined our new Prime Minister, but they tell us little about the groupings inside the party: how the Left and Right really acted, or Scottish and Welsh MPs, or the ones with marginal seats. When the false rumours and biased claims are set aside, remarkably little is yet known about how MPs behaved.

It is now possible to fill in some of the gaps. During the first two ballots I, at the *Sunday Times*, and Michael Braham, at the London Weekend television programme *Weekend World*, organised as complete a ring-round of MPs as time and the patience of Members would allow. Our chief purpose at the time, I immediately confess, was no more elevated than that of an opinion pollster or racing tipster. We wanted to predict the results. But we did well enough (in the second ballot we had each candidate's score right to within four votes) to feel confident that our record of more than 250 MPs' attitudes can be analysed in some detail. The estimates given here, covering all 317 Labour Members, are of course subject to a small margin of error. But they certainly represent the most accurate picture available of how Labour Members acted.

ROUND ONE	TRIBUNE	NON-TRIBUNE LEFT	MIDDLE	PRO-MARKET RIGHT
FOOT 90	46	25	12	7
CALLAGHAN 84	2	21	40	21
JENKINS 56	0	2	5	49
BENN 37	26	7	2	2
HEALEY 30	2	8	12	8
CROSLAND 17	2	9	3	3
ROUND TWO				
CALLAGHAN141	4	26	47	64
FOOT 133	72	34	15	12
HEALEY 38	2	12	12	12
ROUND THREE				
CALLAGHAN176	5	37	57	77
FOOT 137	73	34	17	13

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The most intriguing conclusion from our analysis is that if Mr Callaghan leads Labour to a general election victory, and then retires, a candidate from the Left will stand an excellent chance of becoming leader. There are two striking pointers to this conclusion. First, Callaghan won much more support than Foot in Scotland and, especially, in Wales. Secondly, Foot was the overwhelming favourite among MPs with marginal seats. Now this is highly relevant for one of Transport House's Labour victory scenarios: the loss of some Welsh and Scottish seats to the Nationalists, outweighed by substantial gains in the English marginals, as the Government reaps the electoral benefits of a mini-boom.

The Left's candidate would, however, have to do at least as well as Michael Foot in capturing the votes of Centre and right-wing MPs. In the chart we give our estimates of votes in all three rounds in each of four broad groups: *Tribune*; non-*Tribune* Members who opposed the Government's Common Market policy last year; the committed pro-Market Right; and other MPs, who roughly comprise the Centre. The Common Market was not, of course, a central issue in the leadership race (though some MPs believe that ghosts from the referendum campaign were not entirely absent); the point is that MPs' attitudes last spring towards the Market provide a useful touchstone for judging how they line up ideologically within the party.

In the first ballot Foot took the lead because he managed to win as many votes from outside his native *Tribune* Group as from inside it. He was even the choice of 19 Centre and Right MPs. This performance contrasts sharply with the chief standard-bearer of the Right, Roy Jenkins. Jenkins dominated the pro-Market vote, in much the same way that Foot dominated *Tribune*. But unlike Foot, he could find practically no support outside his natural power-base. Of the 227 Labour MPs who are not part of the committed pro-Market lobby, Jenkins probably won only seven votes. When his campaign committee met after round one and agreed that he should withdraw, this fact must have been as persuasive as his disappointing total vote.

Callaghan's first-round strength came most notably from the Centre – the section of the party, incidentally, which had the greatest tendency to produce MPs who told us 'Stop wasting my time', 'It's a secret ballot, you know', or, most puzzlingly, 'You are indulging in idle speculation – get back to reporting the facts'. Judging from the high proportion of Foot, Benn and Jenkins supporters who *did* reveal their allegiances, a large slice of these uncommunicative MPs clearly voted for Callaghan. Were they reflecting his own unwillingness to talk to the press – or their own half-heartedness? It was certainly remarkable how little positive *enthusiasm* we found among Callaghan supporters.

On top of scoring well among the Centre MPs, Callaghan attracted sufficient support from the pro-Market Right and non-*Tribune* Left to come within six votes of Foot's total in round one. In the second round, however, the profile of Callaghan's support changed sharply, with almost half his votes coming from the Right, as he picked up the lion's share of Jenkins's supporters. Callaghan made few second round gains in the Centre or Left, and barely penetrated the *Tribune* Group at all. Foot also made very few second round gains outside his normal hunting ground. Even so, he ended up with 27 Centre and Right votes, a figure which must have touched 30 in this week's run-off. (With John Ryman not voting in the final round, Foot picked up five Healey votes. It is reasonable to suppose that three of these came from the Centre and Right.)

This Left-Right division of the party was most useful to us in making projections for the first two ballots: it helped us check the quality – statistically speaking – of our sample. But there are, of course, other important groupings inside the party. Regional background, trade union support, and the nature of local constituencies all matter. Callaghan, for example, must be especially pleased with his Scottish and Welsh vote, given the devolution battles ahead. Indeed, if only English MPs had voted Foot would have stayed ahead on the second ballot. This is our estimate of how the second ballot went:

	England	Scotland & Wales
Callaghan	105	36
Foot	110	23
Healey	35	3

There are two theories for Callaghan's Celtic strength. The first is that, until recently, Labour was so overwhelmingly the establishment party in both countries that it has tended to provide a high proportion of Centre and Right MPs. The second theory is that a fear of the Nationalists prompted a number of Scottish and Welsh MPs to plump for Callaghan as the 'safe' candidate.

If the 'safety first' explanation is correct in this case, it certainly does not apply to MPs with marginal seats. Thirty Labour Members have majorities of less than 2,000. Our inquiries suggest that Foot collected 20 of these in round two votes, Callaghan nine, and Healey one. One of Foot's lieutenants – with a highly marginal constituency himself – told me that this reflected a deliberate tactic in the Foot campaign. They argued that the last few hundred votes which can sway a marginal seat are gained or lost depending on the loyalty and enthusiasm of local party workers, and this in turn would be generated much more if Foot were leader than if Jim were smiling benignly but uninspiringly from Number 10. On the other hand, recent opinion polls – in the *Sunday Times* and elsewhere – show Callaghan to be much better liked and respected at present among voters. At least one marginal MP switched his vote in round two from Foot to Callaghan directly because of this: and one of our new Prime Minister's campaign managers told me how eagerly they thrust the *Sunday Times* 'Voters Want Callaghan' poll report under the noses of wavering MPs. There may, therefore, be a different explanation of Foot's strength among marginal MPs – that their constituency parties tend to be more active, picking younger, more lively and left-wing candidates than the average.

Union-sponsored MPs, taken as a whole, voted in much the same way as non-sponsored MPs. But within the totals there were some clear line-ups. MPs backed by Jack Jones's Transport Workers supported Foot rather than Callaghan by three-to-one; those backed by Hugh Scanlon's Engineers Union by two-to-one. But MPs linked with the third major union, the General and Municipal Workers, voted almost to a man for Callaghan, who also had the edge among MPs sponsored by the National Union of Mineworkers. Despite the exertions of Michael McGahey and Arthur Scargill, a strong streak of conservatism remains in the NUM. Even so, for Foot, who launched his ministerial career by settling their 1974 strike, and who has now come so close to capturing the party leadership, their lack of gratitude must be especially galling.

Peter Wilby

The NUS Looks to Its Own

Before lunch in Llandudno last Tuesday Mr Charles Clarke, president of the National Union of Students, was wearing a tie, an immaculate dark suit and a white shirt that would have sent a mother in one of those soap-powder commercials into raptures. After lunch, safely re-elected by the NUS conference, Mr Clarke had discarded jacket and tie and donned a shapeless, brown pullover. The student movement's own Jim Callaghan, who describes himself as 'a Marxist with a small "m" ', could afford to relax. He had seen his main rival, the maverick Hugh Lanning (once an International Socialist, later cast into outer darkness for 'careerist ambitions', now fallen among Maoists) lose not only his bid for the presidency but also the position of treasurer that he has held for the past year.

So the Broad Left, the alliance of communists, *Tribune*ites and other socialists that has ruled the NUS for two student generations, came away from Llandudno stronger than ever, with its members elected to all the top eight posts on the executive. According to one press preview this conference was to mark 'a decisive about-turn' in which right-wing students would 'strike their most effective blow' against the Broad Left. True, under the transferable vote system it was Conservative third-preference votes that eventually held the balance and put Mr Clarke and his comrades back in power – if you can describe that as an effective blow.

Yet despite a year of intensive, well organised campaigning, despite generous publicity in the national press, despite having in Mark Hapgood, full-time chairman of the Federation of Conservative Students, the most personable of the presidential candidates, the anti-Marxists in the NUS – Liberals, Tories and social democrats – failed to strengthen their position. At its highest their combined strength in the elections was less than 200 votes from over 750 delegates.

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Numerically that was marginally higher than last year; proportionately there was no change. The only real change from last year, indeed, was that the official Conservatives replaced the Liberals as the chief anti-Marxist challenge. They went to Llandudno with about 70 committed delegates. Their task was to pick up votes from the 200-odd politically uncommitted delegates, many of them from the smaller colleges of further education and teacher training. In this, the Conservatives were no more successful than their less sophisticated predecessors.

The attitude of the delegates, no doubt, was that, if you have Mr Clarke, who needs Conservatives? Safe, sensible, predictable, he is unlikely to fluster students, in these inauspicious times, with summonses to the barricades on behalf of inconvenient and improbable causes.

The Broad Left's strength is that it plainly recognises that students will have a significant and permanent political role only when they cease to be students. To talk of 'building' a mass student movement, united behind some esoteric political analysis, is patent nonsense when the majority of students have come and gone in less than three years. Marxists (whether with a small or large 'M') ought to know that a transitory social condition remote from any contact with the means of production and distribution is no basis for genuine political consciousness.

So the NUS, recognising the bankruptcy of political posturing on behalf of the nation's oppressed (whose condition has not been noticeably improved by the students' efforts and who seem, anyway, singularly ungrateful for the solicitude of their self-appointed allies), has turned back to protecting its own members' interests. Grants, higher education policy, students' rights to social security, overseas students and the constitution of the NUS itself were the priorities at Llandudno. Southern Africa, Spain, India, Chile, Portugal, Cyprus, Soviet dissidents and the criminal trespass law, favourite topics in the past for student analysis, all failed to get on the agenda.

And when it comes to the details of policy on, say, grants it is quite clear where the Broad Left stands on romantic idealism. The Conservatives want to settle the NUS with an explicit commitment to give priority, in its talks with the Government, to improving provision for 16- to 19-year-olds, extending day-release courses, and getting mandatory grants for students on lower-level courses. The policy makes admirable social and educational sense – but it is hardly likely to engender enthusiasm among full-time degree students, struggling on inadequate grants, in the universities and polytechnics where the NUS has its most active constituent unions. The Broad Left is far more subtle and realistic: it will start talking about priorities of that sort only when the Government produces enough money to look after the main grant. It is the Right, not the broad Left, who rival the Trotskyists as impractical idealists. 'We're not a Christian organisation to give away money to the poor,' a leading member of the NUS executive told me this week. The NUS leadership has learnt, from big industrial unions, to base its activities on hard-headed self-interest..

James Fenton

Sihanouk's Last Year

One year ago, we were waiting for Phnom Penh to fall: the First National City Bank had ordered that all spare travellers' cheques in the capital should be burned; the troops from Kompong Seila had just eaten their paymaster; the Khmer Rouge were reported advancing on the city, coming up the Mekong in a convoy of sampans; the US embassy was destroying documents; and the US ambassador was about to ask Sihanouk to return. Everyone was talking about what would happen after the war, and in the nervous euphoria that prevailed there were many who thought – well – perhaps it would not be too bad. There was a movement in favour of the Khmer Rouge. There was a strong impulse for peace. There was the bewitching prospect of the return of the king.

Now, with the resignation of Sihanouk as Cambodian head of state and his reported return to Peking, the last touch has been put to the victory of the Khmer Rouge. If a country can abort its history, that is what the Cambodian communists have achieved over the last year. They have emptied the cities, killed off those leaders on whom they were able to lay their hands, transported vast sections of the population to work in the fields, and wiped out the heritage of the colonial age, the age of Sihanouk and the age of Lon Nol. It is pointless to ignore, as some would like to ignore, the stories which have filtered through to Thailand – stories of widespread massacres and brutality, of the victors' savage revenge.

It is said that, on his return to Phnom Penh, Sihanouk spent two days weeping in his palace, at the sight of what had happened to Cambodia. He was resolved at that time, despite the hostility of the Khmer Rouge leadership, to continue in office in the hope that, one day, he would be able to influence events for the better. In effect, however, he was a prisoner in the empty, overgrown capital. And whether eventually he was forced to resign, or simply gave up hope, makes little difference. The time for Sihanoukism had passed long since, and the presence of the figurehead – the godhead – was simply an embarrassment and a threat.

Sihanouk's political philosophy was not one of the most despicable the world has seen: it created a semi-nationalised economy, produced a high standard of education and a reasonable standard of living. There were two factors which doomed it. First, the Cambodian middle class was weak, and open to corruption; it could not take over Sihanouk's own functions, in the style of a parliamentary democracy; but it was powerful enough to subvert the political process. Secondly, there was the simple factor of geography. Sihanoukism might have been given a chance in the Sixties, had it existed in some other quarter of the globe. But not in Indochina. Not at that time.

If you read Sihanouk's account of his overthrow, *My War with the CIA*, you might gain the impression that the man is a romancer – a paranoiac perhaps. I'm afraid, however, that the majority of it is true. Last summer, during the early months of Ho Chi Minh City, I met a man who took part in the CIA-backed movement against Sihanouk, and he confirmed the story on most points. He had been enlisted as a student, had been paid from Saigon, and at the time of the Lon Nol coup in 1970 had become an officer in the army. It was all prepared years in advance, and built up on right-wing romanticism, the prospect of loot, and the exploitation of naïveté. When I asked this man why he had worked against Sihanouk, he said simply: 'I was flattered. Before, I had just been a student. Now I was a somebody.'

But a love of money, a taste for a fancy uniform and a touching faith in the United States of America were not enough to run the war. The middle class which had failed to support Sihanouk failed also to run Lon Nol's republic. All they could do was destroy the peasant armies which came, time and time again, against them. And when the war ended, the decimated, bitter, youthful army that took over was incapable of controlling what amounted to half the country's population, without resort to the gun.

It is said that the most dangerous thing to be in Cambodia today is – an educated man. It is said that the old officer corps has been wiped out. It is even said that retribution reaches down as far as the NCO level. And, in a terrible way, all this is explicable. The Khmer Rouge will never tell us of their defeats, but if they did we might be able to understand their present motivation. Perhaps Sihanouk, now that he has retired, will be able to tell us something of what happened. To a certain extent, he foresaw it. The tragedy was – there was nothing he could do.

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Anthony Howard

Readers' Questionnaire Report

Over 5,000 readers responded to the questionnaire that we published in our issue of 13 February - 4,556 of them readers within the UK and 647 of them readers abroad. That represents something over a 10-per-cent return on the NS's paying customers, which on any market research standards is an excellent response. We are most grateful to all those who cooperated.

NEW STATESMAN readers are an awkward lot – it is not, I am sure, that they mean to be perverse: rather that they happen, refreshingly, to comprise a host of diverse and variegated individuals – all with minds of their own but without a trace of a unifying, collective consciousness. This survey, designed specifically to establish readers' reactions towards the editorial content of the paper, was the first we had organised in 21 years. It provoked, as might have been expected, all sorts and conditions of men (and women) into replying, each and every one of them with clear ideas of their own about the paper but with very little that could be translated into a coherent message for the editor and the staff. Take, for example, one simple anomaly revealed in the table below. Although two-and-a-half times as many readers said they bought the paper for the front-half as claimed they did for the back-half, that in no way stopped Book Reviews being voted the second favourite feature in the whole paper. Nor is that the only difficulty or dilemma in assessing the results. There was, for instance, a considerable demand for longer articles, especially on economic topics; it was answered, however, by an even heavier protest vote *against* 'long, boring articles, particularly on economics'.

Similarly, with contributors. If Paul Johnson won the individual popularity stakes in a canter, he also came a close second to a former contributor from Somerset (*de mortuis* . . .) for the slightly less enviable trophy for being the NS writer readers could most easily do without. Indeed, of the six current NS writers who topped the first list (Paul Johnson, Roger Woddis, Arthur Marshall, Dennis Potter, Anne Bennett and C. H. Rolph) no fewer than four (no names . . .) also turned up in the first six places of the second. Which, since strong reactions are the stuff of good journalism, no doubt proves what good journalists the four of them must be.

Some respondents were plainly anxious lest the NS in future was going, as it were, to be guided by Gallup Poll. Both Q.9 on the questionnaire ('What new features would you suggest?') and the concluding invitation to make 'comments and criticisms' brought some pretty crisp reactions – of which 'You're the editor, aren't you?' or 'What do you think you're paid for?' were among the more polite. But that, in fact, was never the intention behind the exercise. And, even if it had been, it would soon have been confounded. What, for example, could any editor make of the Roman Catholic priest from Suffolk who wrote?

> I am a communist in reality. I support Labour but vote Tory. I am anti-socialist because I believe it leads to totalitarianism. But I am also opposed to both Liberals and Conservatives as they simply want to cover up the defects of capitalism.

That, however, may merely have been daunting. A don from Cambridge clearly set out to be downright intimidating:

> Having read every issue of the paper, I seriously believe that it is the nastiest and, in parts, the most vulgar weekly in the literary field. It has done more damage to this country than any other paper.

A secondary purpose of the survey was, of course, to discover what kind of readers the NS has – and the two samples given above should not necessarily be taken as having been specially selected as a representative cross-section of the NS's readership. In fact, the replies plainly demonstrated that the familiar picture of the NS reader – the gangling Fabian vegetarian, usually with glasses and rarely without a worried frown – is not so much a caricature as a total distortion of the truth. Admittedly, he/she tends to be a Labour voter – no less than 58 per cent classified themselves as such (though not a few added some such comment as 'God help me' immediately afterwards) while 33 per cent preferred to give no political affiliation or indicated support for something other than the three main parties. The real surprise came, however, over incomes: 36 per cent of respondents earned over £5,000 a year, with 8 per cent over £10,000. Perhaps it is time that the traditional image of the NS reader sitting alone in his bed-sit with his boiled egg was finally buried (advertising agencies please copy and thereby answer the plaintive cry of a woman lawyer reader in Holland: 'I would like more advertisements but then I suppose so would you!').

Nor, on other grounds, should the loneliness tag stick. Among occupations education easily predominated – almost a third of the respondents to the questionnaire being either students, teachers or academics. There was also, however, a sizable proportion of civil servants (6.1 per cent), journalists and writers (5.1 per cent) and people – doctors, nurses, dentists etc. – we broadly categorised as being 'in medicine' (4.3 per cent). None of them, one might have thought, jobs or callings chosen by people who preferred to keep themselves to themselves and to avoid any unnecessary contact with others.

In his home life, too, at least the NEW STATESMAN male reader seems to be totally representative of the country at large – thus no doubt disappointing the reader who expressed himself shocked at the way in which 'sex-starved middle-aged socialists are encouraged to look for a bit of left-wing "nooky" ' in our personal advertisements column. In fact 69 per cent of the male respondents to the questionnaire were married as compared with 31 per cent who were single (the figures for the entire male population are 69.2 and 30.8 respectively). Only our female readers, with a large proportion of 'career' women – many in the older age groups – departed significantly from the norm: only 57 per cent of them were married (national figure 63.4 per cent) compared with 43 per cent unmarried (national figure 36.6 per cent). The other imbalance, alas, still comes in with the NS's own sex breakdown: no less than 77 per cent of replies came from men and only 23 per cent from women – though some forms neatly came back from both with each question answered in different colours of ink (thereby disposing of the reader who angrily complained: 'Why do you make provision for only one member of the household to answer your questionnaire?').

On age, too, for all his nonconformist reputation, the NS reader appears to conform very much to the national pattern.

Front/Back Half Preferences

3,738 respondents expressed a positive preference for either the front or the back half. The remainder replied that they liked both halves equally, using answers like '50/50', 'evens', 'about the same', 'neither' etc.

Of those who did express a positive preference the balance was as follows:

	No.	Per cent
Front	2,653	71
Back	1,085	29
	3,738	100

These percentages were the same for UK and overseas respondents.

Favourite Features

	No of Votes	Antis
London Diary	2,836	(130)
Book Reviews	1,715	(255)
This England	1,545	(22)
Spotlight	1,425	(72)
Weekend Comp.	1,416	(164)
Letters	1,137	(68)
Leader	965	(186)
Film Reviews	657	(201)
Political Features	620	(77)
First Person	510	(202)
Theatre Reviews	480	(197)
TV Column	459	(147)
Arts Reviews	445	(135)
Profiles	297	(63)
Crossword	290	(268)

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In terms of the youngest readers we are, perhaps inevitably, light on the 'teens (15-19) – with, on the evidence of the questionnaire, only 3 per cent of readers in that bracket compared within a 9.4 percentage in the population as a whole. But we pick up quickly with the twenties and even more heavily with the thirties: in the former we are just at the national average and in the latter significantly (by some 6.5 per cent) ahead of it. In the forties and the fifties age-groups we are more or less exactly in true with the proportions of the national population as a whole and only fall behind again (and that only marginally) with the over-sixties.

Two more sets of statistics and we shall have done. No less than 80 per cent of NS readers have followed, or are following, a full-time course of higher education – either at university (73 per cent) or at a polytechnic, college of education or similar institution (27 per cent): the total figure for all categories of higher education so far as the country at large is concerned is a mere 12 per cent. Possibly even more impressively, NS readers, though they do not yet show a clear majority of trade union members, are getting very near to it. Of UK readers no less than 48 per cent can now boast union cards – with Nalgo, the NUT, ASTMS and the NUJ leading the field. Here again the NS is ahead of the national trend – though not by quite so sizable a distance as in the field of higher education. Revealingly or not, 21 years ago in the pre-Robbins era, the NS claimed only 39 per cent of graduate or undergraduate readers and, in the days before the white-collar union revolution, kept a discreet silence on the whole question of trade union membership.

The trouble with all figures and percentages is, of course, that they inevitably make for impersonal reading – and what in fact stands out from the replies to our questionnaire is just how *personal* a relationship most of our readers feel they have with the paper. They are certainly entitled to it in terms of loyalty: 3,080 out of the 5,000 respondents had been reading the NS for more than ten years and no fewer than 4,742 (again out of 5,000) insisted that they read it every week. In those circumstances, browsing through the replies (far the most rewarding, if necessarily the least scientific, part of the exercise) becomes rather like entering a room to find it full, not of strangers, but of acquaintances and in some cases of friends.

If it is impossible (see above) to produce an 'identikit' that would fit them all, it is at least easy enough to recognise the types. There is, first of all, Mr and Mrs High-Mind, usually to be found in the older age-group, who do not want to be bothered with trivia or gossip (especially if it is malicious) but who yearn for more discussion of abstract ideas and principles, with particular attention to ecology and the Third World. They are in many ways the salt of the NEW STATESMAN earth – and if the paper ever loses its savour for them we shall be in trouble. They find, however, their counterbalance in Mr and Mrs Young-in-Heart, who clamour for more investigative journalism and in particular the exposure of scandals whether in national or local government: what, they ask quite properly, did the NS do about Mr Maudling or even Mr Poulson? – though some of them give us credit for dealing fairly decisively with Mr Nixon and Mr Thieu long before most others could bring themselves to face the truth.

Then across the room, looking a little severe, is Mr Broad-Mind talking earnestly to Miss Non-Political: they dislike the stridency of the paper's front page intensely and only allow their lips to purse into something approaching approval when the subject of the Books pages is brought up: they were, however, reasonably pleased to see Sir Keith Joseph writing in the front half of the paper and prefer him in every way to the 'partisan' Mr Heffer. They share something in common, though by no means everything, with Mr and Mrs Antiwen who resent very strongly what they claim is the NS's idea that nothing that happens outside a five-mile radius of Charing Cross can be of any conceivable interest to anyone; they miss Edward Hyams increasingly and would very much like a country, or at least agricultural, column to be included in the paper.

Other Papers Read

Dailies	No	Per cent
Guardian	2,613	59.0
Times	1,305	29.5
Telegraph	476	10.7
Mirror	279	6.3
Financial Times	269	6.1
Mail	209	4.7
Sundays		
Observer	2,376	53.6
Sunday Times	2,273	51.3
Sunday Telegraph	284	6.4
Sunday Express	218	4.9
Sunday Mirror	164	3.7

A slightly special case is represented by Mr and Mrs X. Patriate. Although full of goodwill – and, for my money, the guests-of-honour – only a lifetime of dedication and discipline prevents, at least from time to time, their patience from snapping. Like our indigenous foreign readers, they simply cannot understand why it should be impossible for us to spell out the names of British organisations or institutions rather than lazily just giving their initials: why, they ask, should the NEW STATESMAN, of all papers, join in 'a bias against understanding'? And what, since we asked their opinion, is wrong with having in each issue a survey or summary of the major news of the week? All right, they know they do not form a majority – but should not minorities have some rights? The last thing, they remind us, that those who see the world as their parish can afford to be is 'parochial' in the strict sense.

Theirs is a very persuasive case – but if one tone comes even more strongly across the hubbub it is, I fancy, that of Mr and Mrs Plainman. They haven't, they explain, had a university education – though, if they had been a bit younger, they would not only have liked it but probably have got it. As it is, however, long articles are not for them, they detest any whiff of highbrowism and confess to a secret (or not-so-secret) suspicion that the NS, unless it takes a firm grip on itself, will soon be in danger of surrendering to intellectual snobbery. They would like to see books reviewed that they actually want to read – and they wish Crucifer would abandon his tiresome habit of name-dropping in his column. They also deplore what they claim recently to have detected – 'a tendency to use less civilised language than we are accustomed to; one should move with the times but not necessarily downwards'.

Somewhere, no doubt, in the corner of the room there must be a pool of contentment – but it has never been the way of NS readers to provide any cause for complacency. If there is any reassurance for the editor, it is perhaps to be found in the group of young people who arrived rather late and are still standing slightly nervously by the door. They represent something like 17 per cent of the NS's total readership – the group that has joined in the last three years; and, on the whole, their questionnaire forms, complete with jokes and wine stains, were jollier than anyone else's (they also tended to come in with twin answers, though not necessarily from respondents with the same surname). Not that they had any monopoly when it came to laughs. It was, after all, a middle-aged Welsh property developer who announced: 'Since the present editor took over there has been a gross lowering of intellectual standards – the anti-Establishment bias being presented in a manner only appropriate to the lower mental grades and orders.' And, rather more kindly, it was a landowner from Bury St Edmunds who went to the trouble of warning us: 'This questionnaire has been damaged by water: this is because my wife *will* read it in the bath – and frequently drops it in when she falls asleep.'

For the rest, what I suppose stood out – above even the exasperation – was the affection. Not that it was in any way 'sloppily' expressed. One anonymous respondent had a particularly brisk way with the last question asking for 'comments or criticisms'. Having answered no other question at all, he simply wrote against that one: 'Don't be so sensitive – if we don't like it, we won't buy it.' Which perhaps qualifies as *verb sap*. Then there was the reader of five years' standing in Basildon who, in answer to Q.6 ('Why did you first become a reader?), explained with total candour: 'I thought it would help me to understand politics – alas, I'm still as totally bewildered now as I was then.' Some readers, though, were kinder. A doctor in Leicester touchingly said: 'I may one day give up a daily newspaper, but never the NS.' A retired translator in Broadstairs: 'I suppose I have grown accustomed to its funny little ways.' And a designer/illustrator in St John's Wood, taking the analogy further – even to danger point: 'One does not divorce a 25-year marriage over a patch of estrangement.'

Perhaps, however, if I were allowed to take my pick from the 2,000 'raw' replies I have so far read (I promise to read the remaining 3,000 in the next fortnight), it would be the one that came from a civil servant in Ashtead, Surrey. It said simply at the end: 'Reading the NS is rather like going to church. You'd like to believe it, you don't – but you can't quite give it up.' Which, even for humanists, ought to be fair enough.

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London Diary

☐ Watching James Callaghan slide almost effortlessly into the centre seat on the Treasury bench last Tuesday I realised with a jolt that he was the third Labour Party leader I had seen make his debut in the Commons. The first occasion is the one I remember best. It was a Wednesday just before Christmas in 1955 – with Suez still in the future and Sir Anthony Eden installed in Downing Street apparently for the next decade. Hugh Gaitskell, then just 49, came shyly in – looking pink as he always did when he was embarrassed. But the moment he was spotted a charge of excitement seemed to run through the whole House. I cannot remember what anyone said: I simply recall the electricity. The second occasion – a Thursday night in February 1963 – has for some reason not left the same imprint on my memory. Perhaps the real drama had all happened earlier on – in Committee Room 14 where Harold Wilson had just made an impassioned appeal to George Brown to continue in the deputy leadership, only to meet with the somewhat churlish response 'I will need time to consider my position': a need that Brown promptly demonstrated by disappearing to Scotland for a week, thereby paralysing all the new leader's dispositions. But the full anti-climax, unless I'm getting jaded with the years, came only last Tuesday. Although Bob Mellish (a former firm Foot supporter) made a somewhat forlorn effort to wave an Order Paper when the new PM entered the Chamber, only when Callaghan actually got to his feet at 3.15 p.m. was there anything approaching a full-throated cheer. He managed, however, to get through his first Question Time pretty satisfactorily. His best moment came when he was being pressed by a number of Tories about the press conference Tony Benn had given on 17 March, at the height of the leadership election. He hadn't, he intimated, been a witness to the offending performance himself – but having studied the transcript with some care all he could say was that 'if there had not been a better candidate in the field, I might even have voted for him myself'. A one-man bomb disposal squad, that's our new PM.

☐ In some ways the most exciting event, as seen from the Gallery on Tuesday, was the sight of those two 'redeployed' politicians, Wilson and Heath, sitting directly opposite each other for the first time for more than a year. Facing one another from the first seat below the gangway, each is now directly in the eye-line of the other. You wouldn't have thought so, though, for at least three minutes on Tuesday afternoon. Wilson had come in first and Heath arrived shortly afterwards, just before 3 o'clock. As the clock ticked on – and Wilson gazed resolutely towards the Speaker and Heath stared at his boots – even the liveried attendants in the Press Gallery began to get worried. Then with almost majestic deliberation Wilson allowed his eyes to swivel, Heath almost imperceptibly inclined his head – and my white-tied and tail-coated friend in the Gallery stage-whispered with audible relief: 'Oh, I'm glad about that – after all they used to call it "the best club in London".'

☐ The dignity of its reputation was, however, almost imperilled an hour or two later in the tea-room. Tony Benn, with that occasional irreverence which remains his most engaging characteristic, was showing everyone within sight a letter he had received that morning from Number 10. 'I have today,' it began – it was dated Monday 5 April, 'submitted my resignation to the Queen.' It then went on to make it clear that every other member of the cabinet must be considered to have resigned too – but, not content with that, proceeded to issue a general directive that they all stay at their posts until getting further word from on high. Tony Benn, as he volubly explained to anyone within earshot, was disturbed by 'the revolutionary constitutional implications' of the letter. For it was signed 'Harold Wilson' – and its very first sentence made it clear that he had ceased to hold office when he wrote it. 'Since when,' Benn went round busily asking, 'have Her Majesty's ministers taken their orders from a single back-bench Member of the House of Commons?' At that moment the House of Commons's newest, and most inexperienced back-bencher entered the tea room. The joke was explained to him – but he was not amused.

☐ I'm surprised at the suggestions that have surfaced, even in some sections of the press, that Labour's election procedure took far too long – and that it must never be allowed to happen in the same way again. Probably a case can be made that Denis Healey's obstinacy (or egomania) cost the country something like £200m. in reserves – but that was the result of a personality flaw rather than any fault in the system. The latter struck me as having worked pretty well – and even economically in terms of time. In 1963, 27 days passed between Gaitskell's death on 18 January and Wilson's election on 14 February: this time a mere 20 days separated Wilson's retirement on 16 March and Callaghan's election on 5 April. A marginal difference? Perhaps – but still a substantial contrast to what happens in other democracies. It's taking the Americans, after all, nine months to elect a President; and it took the French almost as many weeks to elect Giscard d'Estaing just two years ago. I don't happen to like our own system much; but it seems silly to cavil at it for the one advantage it brings us – a time-span as limited as that of most other countries is protracted.

☐ Talking of which, I can't help wondering what kind of time-span the 'chocolate soldiers' – recruited by the Rowntree Trust and now assimilated at huge and unmelting expense by the Exchequer – have left. I heard Stuart Holland talking about the 'special advisers', as they like to be called, on the BBC *Today* programme the other morning – and I was glad to detect a certain note of anxiety concerning their future in his voice. It's no secret that Wilson had lately become fairly restive about them; and Callaghan, whose own Man Friday, Tom McNally, at least comes out of Transport House is, I suspect, likely to have even less patience with the present liquorice allsorts of academics-on-the-make and Svengalis-in-search-of-Trilbys than his predecessor did. Having cleaned out Number 10, he may well feel like doing the same with all the individual government departments. Eunuchs about the court have never seemed to me to have much to do with democratic, let alone 'populist', socialism.

☐ One wise decision, however, Callaghan has made. If my information is correct, the one person the new Prime Minister has asked to stay, at least for the time being, at Number 10 is Bernard Donoughue, the head of the political, as opposed to the civil service, 'think tank'. I doubt if he will have the same pre-eminence of influence – or, indeed the same right of access to the emperor's ear – that he enjoyed in the past. But it is still sensible that he should remain, at least for a bit. The first moment at which I began to feel reassured that the new regime meant business was when someone closely involved in it told me last week: 'You see, we need Bernard. Otherwise, with all the rest gone, we'd run the risk of being putty in the hands of Sir John Hunt.' From which perhaps even Lady Falkender is entitled to take away the consolation that she did not fight the good fight in vain after all.

☐ The one man whom no one at least in Fleet Street has been sorry to see go is Wilson's former press secretary, Joe Haines. He fully earned his title as not only the most uncommunicative, but also the most litigious, press man at Number 10 in modern times. But bygones . . . ? Well, all right. He has, I understand, pushed away a coronet on two separate occasions – and at a time when journalists seem to reach out ever more greedily for baubles that is certainly a matter for congratulation. I wish him a prosperous and profitable future in his own redeployment – with, or so I'm told, the most successful Conservative provincial newspaper group in the country, Lord Barnetson's United Newspapers.

Crucifer

This England

Prizes: £1.50 book token for first entry, £1 tokens for others printed. Paste entries on a postcard.

☐ This Conference, recognising the general increase in the incidence of alcoholism among staff in the television industry, requests the incoming General Council to initiate immediate negotiations with the employers in order to evolve a national policy for dealing with this insidious disease, since existing disciplinary procedures throughout the industry are totally inadequate. – *Scottish Television ACTT Conference Agenda* (Peter Mullings)

☐ Another resident, Baronet Sir Reginald de Montmorency, who also opposed the idea, said he was 'sympathetic to these people' but the centre would be a 'damned nuisance.' 'I cannot stand children, mad people and drunks,' he said. His wife said it would depress her having deaf children just around the corner. – *Daily Telegraph* (Dennis Winston)

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Michael Vestey

Foxed at the Hounds

I knew exactly what it would be like, as we drove in the wintry sunshine towards the Hare and Hounds. Lip-smacking hearties whacking their riding crops across wide bejodhpurred expanses and provoking deep-throated whinnying noises from sturdy countrywomen. Outside the pub a large crowd had gathered in a circle, in the middle of which, a poker-faced man in a black riding coat and hat sat on a bored-looking horse. We were early.

'So this is where they start from, is it?' I asked my wife.

I could almost hear her shuddering next to me. 'If you mean, is this the meet, then yes, it is,' she replied sharply. My wife grew up in the country, you understand. In my childhood, the country was somewhere Green Line buses went to.

Soon, to the obvious relief of both horse and rider, the clatter of hooves against asphalt could be heard. The huntsmen, er, rather huntspersons were arriving. They nearly all wore black, except for two who, apparently, were servants of the hunt.

'Look,' I said to my four-year-old, 'they're wearing red tunics, those two.'

'Red tunics!' exclaimed an outraged female voice besides me. My wife again. 'Pink coats, if you don't mind. They're pink!' 'Oh, sorry, they look red to me.'

If I kept on at this rate my wife would soon disown me, so I shut up. It was very formal, none of the *Tom Jones* hi-jinks I expected. Several of the huntsmen had brown Devonshire faces with equally brown Devonshire voices. They drank their sherry and, having sorted out an argument between two irritable horses, made off round the town for a day's hunting.

I thought that would be the last I would ever see of them, as my family saloon shies at jumping hedges, though it doesn't mind the mud. Nevertheless, we drove out of town and up into the hills in the general direction of hunting territory. And there, from the top of a hill, we had a magnificent view down into the valley where we could see the hunt streaming slowly across the fields. But then, for nearly an hour, horses and riders stayed chatting in the middle of a field while huntsmen and hounds went into a nearby wood to find a fox.

'Is that where the fox is thought to be,' I asked, pointing towards the wood.

'That is the covert, yes,' she answered impatiently.

'And do I take it that the dogs are sniffing around in the wood looking for the fox so as to drive him out into the open and begin the chase?'

From the look on my wife's face it was clear I would soon be sent home in disgrace. 'The *hounds* are searching the covert, yes.'

Typical, I thought. She hasn't been near a hunt for years. One whiff of cow dung and she's already the superior countrywoman. I'm cast as the idiot townie. Meanwhile, as it got colder, my son, bored by the absence of any activity, was trying to electrocute himself on a cow fence.

It was becoming clear, even to me, that there was no fox in the wood. The hunt moved off up the hill towards us. Cars blocking the narrow lane, were moved so that the hounds could enter the vegetable field and rummage around for the fox in there.

'I can't see any fox hanging around in a field like that,' I said loudly. Expressionless faces swivelled round towards me from behind horses' ears. I felt a bit like a hunt saboteur.

'Listen!' my wife said, nudging me in the ribs.

We all listened. We heard the sound of baying. Then the hunting horn was being blown. And much to my surprise, someone actually yelled: 'Tally Ho!' There were no clapperboards and no one shouted 'Cut!' either.

Suddenly, there was a reddish flash in the lane. The fox! It streaked between parked cars and dived into the thick, high bank. We all jumped on to the bank to see the fox wriggle through and dash into the field beyond. It ran down the hill so fast it did a somersault half-way down, landed unsteadily and continued running. It looked so small, much smaller than the hounds – probably a vixen, my wife said knowledgably later. The nearest hound was only ten feet behind. I suddenly felt frightened for the fox. What would happen if the hounds caught it in front of my very eyes? Could I stand by and watch it being torn to pieces? No, I didn't think that I could.

At the bottom of the hill the fox dashed into a hedge and ran to the right. The hounds went after it but . . . ran to the left. The fox disappeared from view. The hounds began milling around desperately trying to re-locate the scent. But the fox had gone. 'He's gorn t'earth,' an old man chuckled.

'Its got away,' I yelled. 'The bloody dogs have lost it!'

Underneath my contemptuous attitude I was filled with relief, to think that the fox had outwitted the hounds. The riders themselves lifted their bodies from the saddle to stare in the direction of the hounds. They couldn't believe they'd lost the fox. Disappointed, the hunt moved off down the hill to hold an inquest and to find, no doubt, another fox.

Driving back to London, I realised that fox-hunting is such a mysterious part of country life that it's hardly surprising that most urbanites like me don't understand it. Like most people, I'm ambivalent about it – I like the colour but not the blood. And getting close to a strange ritual does things to you. Back in the office, curious colleagues asked: 'Were they actually wearing scarlet tunics?' And: 'Did the dogs catch a fox?'

'They were wearing pink coats actually,' I replied coolly. 'And no, the *hounds* did not catch a fox.'

Roger Woddis

Steppe Lively

Pravda reports the invention of petrol-driven boots which enable the wearer to cover 25 kilometres in an hour.

We report a breakthrough, comrades,
We announce the news with pride:
We have made the great leap forward,
We are lengthening our stride.
We are marching in the vanguard,
Our inventors were the first,
We are miles ahead in footwear,
Anglo-Saxones – do your *verst*!

Our progressive innovation
Leads the way for all mankind,
And the pace of spring-heeled Ivan
Leaves the limping West behind.
From Murmansk to Vladivostok
Rural postmen with long routes
Cry: 'All power to the walkers
In their power-assisted boots!'

Let us now prepare for May Day,
Let us plan the big parade,
With our seven-league *valenki*
Leaving missiles in the shade.
Let us put our best foot forward,
And in step towards our goal
Steal a march on Solzhenitsyn,
As we bare the Russian sole!

First Person

Arthur Marshall

My Pound in Your Pocket

How enraging it is to be brought suddenly face to face with examples of the profligate manner in which the Chancellor and others squander the hard-earned money filched from me in the form of income tax and rates. The GLC, I learn, is to provide £10,000 of your and my cash for the purpose of 'celebrating' the 50th anniversary of the General Strike. Whatever can be the point? Are there to be fireworks and East End bun fights, coloured balloons and dancing in the streets? Why not, happy thought, have *another* General Strike, slightly more successful than the last? Could any expenditure in our present perilous state be dottier? How, in a phrase, dare they?

And another thing. Some years ago I was

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invited to spend a few hours, as a visitor, in one of England's most famous prisons. Elevated position, fresh breezes, extensive moorland views. Its front gates were, it is true, grim and forbidding, but, once inside, grimness totally disappeared and the place seemed oddly familiar. There were flower beds, various living blocks, canned music, the rattle of ping-pong balls, football matches, daily papers and the telly. Classes in this and that. Lunch (three courses) included a choice of pudding and was supervised by smiling father-figures. In the afternoon we watched the dress rehearsal of a play, *The Hasty Heart*, and in the evening there was to be a film, *The Courtneys of Curzon Street*. A green baize noticeboard kept the inmates abreast of local news:

> All those learning the violin will be sorry to hear of the illness of Miss Snodgrass. She hopes to be back with her pupils in a week or so, and, in the meantime, keep practising!

Of course the place seemed familiar. The activities, buildings and general atmosphere were indistinguishable, apart from the choice of pudding, from a good, run-of-the-mill public school. And the present day cost of all this de luxe living, the pleasures of which I have in no way exaggerated? £1,200 per year per head? £1,500? Your money and mine again, wasted, in my view, in turning the place into a bed of roses, a real home from home to which nobody who had battered and robbed an old lady would in any way tremble to return.

There are those who claim that after four years spent at a public school, life has no more shocks or surprises to offer. Nearly true, though old age has a painful jolt or two in store. Emerging recently on to our village road on my way to our deft and charming lady shoemender (can any other village boast such a handy amenity?), I heard two children arguing about the whereabouts of some house or other. 'It's up *that* way, I tell you, past the green gate where that old gentleman came out of.' Apart from me, the road was empty. I looked about me. *What* old gentleman? What could they mean? Of whom were they speaking?

For some years I had been keenly looking forward to my OAP status. In addition to planning to be the very life and soul of the Senior Citizens' Rest Room in Exeter (waggish tales and lengthy, wheezy reminiscences to an audience held captive by arthritic limbs), I was also anxious to have returned to me, in pension form, the considerable amounts of money which the Government had forced me to pay in expensive self-employment stamps for the last umpteen years. Any joy there might have been on this potentially happy occasion was swiftly removed by the tone of my correspondence with the flint-hearted 'authorities'. Their tone, not mine. I might have been trying to steal from them. Grudging and suspicious, they were; unwelcoming.

What was I earning etc? Who was my accountant? There were printed threats of what false information would lead to (I could always have joined Miss Snodgrass's fiddle lessons). And now, because I choose not to be idle and because I work my wits and fingers to the bone, my weekly pension has been removed from me. Why? I am 65. It is my money, not theirs. Why do they refuse to give it back? In any other walk of life, such persons would be swiftly prosecuted for dishonesty. I can have it, they graciously allow, when I am 70, doubtless adding a silent prayer that by then I shall have pegged out. Well, I'm hanging on, just out of spite.

All money matters are a worry and Budget Day itself is, in more ways than one, a long irritation. The happy snaps outside No 11 ('Say cheese, please'), the toothy smiles, the idiot attaché case waved aloft, the Budget speech just about one hour too long, the bouncy forecasts and promises, the TV appearances, the false bonhomie and man-to-man chat. One has seen and heard too many not to know that they bring with them the dreariest of results ('Pound Sinks Even Lower'). A visitor from outer space would see us at once for what we sadly are – a selfish, self-seeking and rather idle nation run by amateurs. I am all for a consortium, modish word, of Marks and Spencer and Sainsbury's taking over the entire shooting-match.

However, always sunny, hopeful and helpful, I am dropping a line to cuddly old Bushy-brows to tell him in which ways I do not want my income tax money spent. I am willing to forgo the now outdated and ridiculous Lord Mayor's Show, together with Her Majesty's rather overabundant yearly displays of somewhat showy scarlet geraniums outside the Palace. I do not wish any of my poor pennies to be frittered away on elaborate entertainment lavished on foreign visitors, however eminent.

They tend to bear outlandish names – Signor Macaroni, Lee Hung Po, Mr P. Chipolata, Sir Radhavabum Gudforyu – and are doubtless important and well-meaning but, to sustain and divert them, let rock cakes and cups of steaming Darjeeling suffice. I wish to pay for no advertisements for British Rail. Nobody in their senses will ever travel on a train who doesn't actually have to, and what person is going to be seduced, by seeing an advertisement, into leaping excitedly into the new 'Silver Bullet' express and go whizzing off on a shopping spree to Hull?

I wish to spend nothing on any part of Concorde, spare or otherwise (can they really be stock-piling spares for aeroplanes that do not yet exist?). And I wish to dissociate myself entirely from all advertisements for something called High Speed Gas, as I simply do not understand whether this is a new kind of gas that rushes extra fast along the pipes, or boils quicker, or with which suicides are speedier, or what, or, indeed, why? High Speed Gas is as perplexing to me as were, in childhood, advertisements for 'bust bodices', for what else could they possibly be for but bodices which had, unfortunately, bust?

Letters to the Editor

. . . Down to the Sea in Ships

Sir, Mary Holland's article headed 'Double Standards at Sea' (NS 26 March) complains because the Race Relations Bill allows British shipping companies to continue to pay seafarers from Asia and Africa at rates negotiated with their own unions, instead of at rates applicable to seafarers domiciled in the UK. This is no doubt an expression of honest indignation: but in our view it is misconceived.

The arguments are complex, and it would be wrong to think that the Government, in formulating the Bill, had not reviewed them thoroughly with all the interested parties including – and not, as the article suggests, excluding – the National Union of Seamen. In addition to the considerations dealt with in the article, there are the following facts which have to be taken into account:

(a) that, except in a temporary recession such as now exists, there are only just enough seafarers to man the ships normally carrying UK crews – let alone the ships manned with non-domiciled ratings. Even now there are not nearly enough UK ratings to man those ships in which the seafarers from the Far East and Africa are serving;

(b) that, in any event, the interests of the UK ratings are protected by an industrial agreement under which no ship coming into service can be manned otherwise than by UK ratings without union agreement. This whole question has been continuously under the surveillance and control of the industry's National Maritime Board; and – in our view – that is the body which can most effectively control it;

(c) that the governments in the countries from which most of the non-domiciled seafarers come will not countenance their employment in UK ships at rates higher than those locally negotiated. If, therefore, higher rates were to be imposed the seafarers concerned, from the developing countries, would be denied the employment that has been theirs for up to 100 years – employment which is highly sought after, and prized once obtained;

(d) that non-domiciled seafarers cannot be compared – as the article suggests they can – to coloured employees living in this country. The Indian and African seafarer's pay is attuned to the cost of living in his own country where the great majority of his expenditure lies – in maintaining his home and family.

(e) that a number of other countries, including those from which the Asian and African seafarers come, where shipping companies are in competition operate the locally negotiated rates of pay – just as British companies do. Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands and Norway are European examples.

The subject should be dealt with not emotively, but dispassionately and objectively. If the question is asked 'Who is harmed by the current practice?' the answer is: 'Nobody – neither British seafarers, nor seafarers from Asia and Africa.' If the question is asked 'Who would be harmed if British rates of pay had to be applied to Asian and African seafarers?' the answer is: 'The Asian and African seafarers, who would lose their employment (unless they managed to obtain employment, which would be at the same – locally negotiated – rates, with the competitors of British companies); the British shipping industry, whose competitive position would be gravely damaged; and the country's balance of payments, which would be likely to suffer a loss of some £70m. or so a year.'

F. B. BOLTON
General Council of British Shipping
145/150 Minories, EC3

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The Press and Michael Foot

Sir, Tom Baistow's article (NS 2 April) arrived as a refreshing voice of sanity in contrast to the virulent balderdash that has hitherto been written about Michael Foot in his bid for the leadership of the Labour Party. The malevolent onslaught that has been conducted against Michael Foot is yet another poignant illustration of the lamentable absence of a balanced presentation of diverse opinion in the national press.

May I commend the adept manner in which Mr Baistow highlighted Fleet Street's highly tendentious evaluation of Mr Foot's eligibility for the leadership? Mr Foot – who despite the *Telegraph*'s hysterical denouncing of him as 'a windy word-spinning poseur' – exudes more charm and intellect in a sentence than the *Telegraph* or its tabloid counterpart, that voyeur's journal, the *Sun*, could summon in a myriad of jaded leader columns.

It is astounding to think that such frenetic outbursts of bigotry could fall under the rubric of 'press freedom'. I join with Tom Baistow in welcoming a genuinely free press, which would facilitate the dissemination of disparate political opinions, not just those of an exclusive coterie in Fleet Street who purport to speak on behalf of the nation.

PHILIP DELANEY

4 Queens Park
Mold, Clwyd

Decisions for Dockland

Sir, Corinna Adam's lively article in last week's NS unfortunately overlooked the most exciting prospect in the future of London's dockland. Here lie nine square miles of land, which, properly handled, could solve the capital's tragic housing problem. Under Labour's Community Land Act the purchase price of land bought by local authorities is the current use value.

Since the scheme (though not the Bill) was first worked out by a sub-committee of Labour's National Executive Committee, some of us have insisted that the current use value of dockland which had not been used for 10 or more years was nil. To be generous we conceded it might be compensated at average agricultural land value – say £700 an acre – and certainly not the £20,000 or more an acre which might be demanded by the owners once permission for house building was granted.

Under the Act the difference between these two values was to go to the community. Until the Act was in full operation there was to be a Development Land Tax of 80 per cent of the profit, i.e. of that difference. Thus the local authorities would be able to buy the land cheaply, net of tax. This would be the biggest boost to housing since John Wheatley's council housing legislation in the Twenties.

Recent correspondence between Salford Metropolitan District Council (in which Manchester's important docks lie) and the minister has cast some doubt about what he and his officials regard as current use value. If John Silkin will stick to the original conception the housing situation can be transformed not only in our country's docklands but also in other overcrowded cities where there are large areas of former industrial land which have been out of use for a decade.

FRANK ALLAUN

House of Commons

For Whom the Bell Tolls

Sir, In his article (NS 26 March), C. H. Rolph uses a form of words which could mislead readers into believing that they do not risk attending court for the purpose of giving evidence if they complain about the ceaseless ringing of a burglar alarm. He writes: 'There is no need for them to go to court: section 9 of the Criminal Justice Act 1967 allows their evidence to be tendered in the form of written statements.' That is only true in cases in which the other party (here, the burglar-alarm owner) does not object within seven days of being shown a copy of the written statement. Section 9 is intended merely to provide a way around the strict rules against hearsay evidence in criminal proceedings, where both sides are agreed that someone's evidence is not in dispute and there is no need to waste his time in court.

Consider, however, if one were defending the owner of an alarm who said that he just could not believe that his bell had been ringing all night as alleged. He would have to be advised to insist on his right to have the complainant brought to court so as to be cross-examined. If the poor complainant, under pressure, were to be shaken in his testimony, there would presumably be an acquittal. It follows that there would be costs awarded against whomever brought the prosecution. From *this* it follows that the police must be reluctant to bring prosecutions unless they are confident in their complainant's qualities as a witness in the box.

In other words, as one would expect, the law is ineffective to protect innocent sufferers unless they are prepared to go all the way in enforcing it.

JEFFREY LITTMAN

4 Verulam Buildings
Gray's Inn
London WC1

Welsh Lobby Fodder

Sir, I find Crucifer's comments on the effects of the Welsh vote in favour of Mr Callaghan (NS 2 April) to be very naïve. You do not appear to be aware of a world outside your cocktail circuit of the London media. The majority of Welsh Labour MPs are faithful party men, anxious to keep Labour in power, mainly to make sure Wales is not governed by the English Tories. They are the party's most faithful lobby fodder. 'Left-wing' mavericks such as Mr Neil Kinnock of Bedwellty are the exception rather than the rule.

The fact that Mr Michael Foot has found himself a safe seat in Wales and there has been a lot of media talk about 'the mantle of Aneurin Bevan' does not mean that Mr Foot's brand of political dilettantism finds favour among the mass of Welsh Labour supporters, who are deadly serious, if also deadly dull, about their politics.

Incidentally, has it passed your notice that at the last election only 48 per cent of the people of Wales voted Labour?

W. J. JAMES

63 Lauderdale Tower
Barbican
London EC2

Miracle Cures

Sir, Nicolas Walter (NS 2 April) objects to my claiming that denial of the possibility of miracles often rests more upon faith in the uniformity of nature than upon historical evidence or reason. In fact his own letter supports what I said. He asks whether it is more probable 'that Fagan was naturally cured by some normal physiological and/or psychological process which is not yet understood by doctors, or that he was supernaturally cured by the intervention of a divine being following the intercession of a dead saint as understood by priests?' I am not sure of the grammatical construction of this last sentence, but would like to remark in passing that Christian belief asserts that no saint is dead in Mr Walter's sense, but on the contrary more alive and active, if one may put it that way, than he was on earth, and that this belief is not confined to priests but shared by Christian laymen also. It would be singularly pointless to ask for the intercession of a dead saint.

What I really wish to challenge, however, is the statement it is 'being empirically scientific and rational which causes most people to doubt the probability of a miracle cure'. Is it either empirical or scientific to refuse even to consider evidence which has been subjected to judicial investigation by experts – especially in a way which prevents any assertion of a miracle going by default by requiring the intervention of a *promotor fidei* (popularly called 'The Devil's Advocate') whose duty it is to put forward every objection he can find against a decision for the miraculous explanation? Is it rational or scientific to rest one's case upon the gratuitous supposition that there *is* a natural explanation, even though the doctors cannot find one? To me this seems faith rather than reason. Perhaps one day the doctors will be able to do so, but, even so, miraculous cures would be at least praeternatural, since they are rare occurrences and unexpected. The scientific course would be to study the evidence on its merits without any presuppositions.

I am afraid that I am unimpressed by the appeal to Hume. As St Thomas Aquinas once remarked, the appeal to authority is the weakest of all arguments. This is all the more so when the alleged authority is an 18th-century philosopher who believed that he lived in a tidy and uniform world, all the mechanisms of which had been explained by Newton. The contemporary scientific world is far less sure of itself and does not in the same way rule out possibilities *a priori*, for much has been discovered since Hume's day and no respectable scientist would claim today that we know all the secrets of the universe.

As regards probabilities, one hard fact in the Fagan case is that it took place in an atmosphere of fervent prayer and I can see no reason why it should be assumed that this had no connection at all with the result, namely a rapid and complete cure without any ordinary medical reason. The hypothesis of neurotic illness was no doubt considered, but it seems unlikely that skilled doctors could not recognise a genuine organic disease like terminal cancer. The mathematical chances against pure coincidence are, I should imagine, astronomical in magnitude. The only way I know of proving a universal negative such as Mr Walter believes in is to examine the evidence for each alleged miraculous cure and destroy its credibility, and there are enough cases of this kind to make that a lifetime's work. I wonder whether Mr Walter is prepared to embark upon

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that, instead of taking advantage of Hume's way out and asserting that even '*reliable*' (my italics) witnesses are not to be believed where a miracle is claimed and must *ex hypothesi* be mistaken? If, as apparently he does, he chooses to burke the whole issue in this way, what is that but dogmatism? In the light of it one begins to see a possibly sinister meaning in Tennyson's lines:

> There lives more faith in honest doubt,
> Believe me, than in half the creeds.
> (*In Memoriam*, xcvi.)

I am sure Mr Walter's doubts are honest, but they have a lot in common with the *foi du charbonnier*.

THOMAS M. PARKER

36 Chalfont Road
Oxford

Sir, May I as a sceptic accept Thomas M. Parker's challenge (Letters, 26 March) and for one moment admit the Fagan cure as a miracle? Where does this take us? The miracle worker could, it would appear, perform other miracles but chooses not to – is this a morality to be admired? Presumably the followers of the God hypothesis would not deny that their God created man (and other animals) in such a way that they will in large numbers develop cancer. He (she or it) is quite happy to perform only the rare kindness of a miracle cure to show how clever he is.

This type of merciless behaviour in the Father will help us to understand the Son admired by these people. He introduced to mankind the equally merciless doctrine of everlasting punishment. Being omniscient, he will have known that his teaching would lead to cruel wars and the persecution of unbelievers and yet took no steps to stop this.

The acceptance of *one* miracle only serves to move the sceptic from a rejection of the God hypothesis to the recognition that the God of the believer is a cruel, merciless and capricious idol.

GERALD SAMUEL

Newby Cottages
Crouch House Road
Edenbridge, Kent

St Paul's Decay

Sir, From his Soho fastness Stephen Fry writes (Letters 19 March) as the self-appointed spokesman of the West Kensington public with his unique blend of inaccuracy, smear, and misrepresentation. Inaccuracy: the signatories to our previous letter were nearly all elected representatives of the students and staff of Hammersmith and West London College (not West London College) writing in their personal capacities; Peter DeGory (not de Cory) was included as one such. Smear: Mr DeGory's dual interest, so sinister in the eyes of Mr Fry and other believers in politics as a conspiracy against the public, has been declared at every level of concern, from Mr Crosland to Mr Fry. Misrepresentation: two of us (after strenuous efforts by Mr Fry's associates to prevent our meeting) have talked with the nucleus of the '165 local teachers' who are alleged to have written to Mr Crosland opposing the development of the college. They told us that though they had certainly signed a petition supporting the maximum provision of open space, they had neither approved nor even seen the letter sent in their name to Mr Crosland and Mr Mulley attacking the college and its staff, and understood the college's need for new buildings.

The 'special interest group' of students so scorned by Mr Fry is 16,000 strong every year, and, like nearly all inner-city students whether in school or college, also has to be 'bussed' to such physical recreation facilities as can be made available. Mr Fry apparently wanted most students to have to bus themselves four miles a day further for the rest of their time as well. We are very glad that Barrie Stead's sane and balanced assessment of the situation has carried the day with Mr Crosland, and that a satisfactory development mix is now to go ahead.

D. W. GRIEVSON — J. C. N. BAILLIE
J. R. PRICE — B. K. SMITH
G. SHAW — JANE KING
B. POLOZYNSKA — STEVE WILLIAMS

Hammersmith and West London College
50 Brook Green
London W6

Tony Godwin Award

Sir, Tony Godwin was exceptional in the contribution that he made to publishing, not least in his encouragement of young talent on both sides of the Atlantic. We would like to commemorate these aspects of his life and work.

Every year the recipient of this award, chosen alternately in the US and in Great Britain, will be able to spend not less than four weeks, learning about publishing in the other country, as the guest of a publishing house. The award will be given to the person most responsible for publishing work – fiction, non-fiction or poetry – which best reflects Tony Godwin's own enthusiasms and ambitions for the books that he published. The judges will, accordingly, in making their choice, look for intellectual excitement, literary excellence, insight into social change, sheer enjoyment or for publishing imagination and integrity.

It will usually be given to editors under 35 years old, but the judges will have the right to award it to anyone else, older or in a different field of publishing, whose achievement they consider outstanding.

A reciprocal committee is being established in the US. We need to cover travelling costs and basic living expenses; and we hope that all Tony Godwin's friends, colleagues and writers will contribute to what we believe will be a fitting memorial to his adventurous spirit and his work.

Contributions may be sent to Tony Godwin Award, c/o Anton Felton, FCA, Hollybush House, Hadley Green, Barnet, Herts.

DEBORAH ROGERS
Chairman

Tony Godwin Award Committee

Royal Commission on Gambling

Sir, As your readers may know, a Royal Commission on Gambling has been established, under Lord Rothschild's chairmanship, to inquire into the existing law and practice relating to betting, gaming, lotteries and prize competition. The Royal Commission is now able to start work and would welcome written evidence from anyone with an interest in, or views on, this subject. The terms of reference of the Commission are 'to inquire into the existing law, and practice thereunder, relating to betting, gaming, lotteries and prize competitions with particular reference to:

(1) The adequacy of the restrictions imposed on the provision of facilities for the different forms of gambling, the consistency of the principles applied, and whether there is need for greater uniformity of control;

(2) the practices and financial structure of the gambling industry and the inter-relation of their gambling interests with other interests;

(3) the publication of information about gambling activities, the methods of selecting winners or fixing odds, and the appropriation of receipts;

(4) the contribution made from the proceedings of gambling towards the support of other activities (including sport), the means by which this might be enhanced, and the conditions to be imposed; and to make recommendations.'

It would be of considerable assistance to the Commission if those offering written evidence, which should if possible be submitted by the end of June, would include precise recommendations for action (if some action is thought necessary) together with the reasons for them.

The Government has asked the Royal Commission to submit an early interim report on the 'possibilities of a levy on football pools or otherwise as a means of providing financial assistance to sport'. The Commission's terms of reference are not of course confined to the possibility of a levy on football pools alone or to helping football alone, and it is for the Commission to decide how wide its interim report should go. The Commission will begin by concentrating on its interim inquiry and it would welcome any evidence bearing on this by mid-May.

QUENTIN THOMAS
Secretary

Royal Commission on Gambling
Commission House
20 Grosvenor Hill
London W1

Words and Meanings

Sir, Diané Collinson (NS 26 March) calls Kingsley Amis to order at some length for overlooking the implication of the word 'facts'. In her final sentence she declares her wish to make 'illiteracy' (query – *sub*literacy?) 'unfashionable' and cites two examples of 'disgracefully abused words'.

What interested me more than the examples she gives is her own use of the words 'would like to' at a short remove from their subject pronoun 'I'. In the latest (1954) edition of his *Dictionary of Modern English Usage*, H. W. Fowler still condemns 'would' in this context as a misuse for 'should', and Sir Ernest Gowers, in the 1962 Penguin edition of the *Complete Plain Words*, sees 'I would like to' as the grammatical equivalent of 'I should like to like to'.

Since I am in general sympathy with Miss Collinson's aim as far as I understand it, I *should* like to know whether or not the Open University or any other academic authority has formally *refuted* the rulings of Fowler and Gowers on this point.

K. EDINBOROUGH

North-East Essex Technical College
Colchester

Very Curious

Sir, Curious, the NS cartoon (2 April) on a theme by Newbolt: the last man goes in watched by a hostile bowler, wicketkeeper and silly mid-on – but no batsman at the other end.

Or are you trying to tell us that politics isn't cricket, old man?

P. L. CARTER

Holgate
Balcombe
Sussex

Michel Saint-Denis

Sir, I have been authorised to write a biography of Michel Saint-Denis and I would be grateful if any of your readers would loan any letters or papers or send me reminiscences relevant to his life and work, both in the theatre and with the BBC during the war. Materials would be acknowledged, safely guarded and carefully returned to the owner.

A. C. SCOTT

c/o Madame Suria Saint-Denis
2 Bloomfield Terrace
London SW1

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BOOKS & ARTS

Leonard Schapiro

Eastern Avenue

Russia: The People and the Power by ROBERT G. KAISER *Secker & Warburg* £5.90

The author was Chief of the Moscow Bureau of the *Washington Post* from 1971 to 1974, and lived in Soviet Russia for three years. Mr Kaiser is a first-class reporter – shrewd, critical, very observant, always sympathetic but never gullible. He talked and talked while he was in Russia, talked to everyone. He continued talking to the new emigrés after he had left Russia. This book is the result of his conversations, observation and reflection, and a very good book it is – very readable, and entertaining as well as instructive. So far as an academic who has not been to Soviet Russia for many years – but has been involved in the study of the country from afar – can judge, it is pretty accurate on the many matters which are very familiar to students of Soviet society, from the thousands of books and articles which are devoted to it – the discomfort, the universal petty, and not so petty, corruption, the inefficiency, except in what is considered important, the military machine and its entourage.

Mr Kaiser examines different aspects of Soviet life in turn – daily life from birth to the grave, the Soviet 'system' and its rulers, propaganda, technology, the economy. Perhaps the most interesting chapters are the ones devoted to the intellectuals – both the official, conformist intellectuals, and the small, brave band of dissidents (of whom, incidentally, he writes, somewhat prematurely, in the past tense: the Soviet authorities, in spite of a combination of repression and expulsion, have not yet succeeded in silencing them). He met and interviewed Sakharov:

> everything about him suggests a kindly professor, from his peaked bald head and the perpetually cracked lens in his reading glasses to his omnipresent bedroom slippers . . . Yet he is a man of remarkable inner strength, borne along by the unswerving courage of his convictions.

He spent a day with Solzhenitsyn:

> bold, vain, dominating, utterly charming when he likes and self-disciplined to an almost inhuman degree . . . He has a superb grin which makes long wrinkles around his eyes . . . The eyes are stunning: a very blinding, very dark blue that I don't think I have ever seen before.

Mr Kaiser is, however, more than just a skilful reporter. He is deeply concerned to inquire into the causes of Soviet basic inefficiency in managing all except a few first priorities in such a way as to result in a quality of life which is a good deal lower than that which would be accepted by a West European, let alone an American. I am not so sure about his emphasis on the Russian character – American authors are almost as fond of pinning national 'characters' on to whole peoples as were the intellectuals of the Russian 19th century. Without indulging in economic determinism, it is surely pretty obvious that after nearly sixty years of over-centralised, state-controlled economy there should come about a close network of vested interests, arrangements for mutual fiddle, indeed every kind of device for circumventing a system which cannot work as it is officially intended to work. And nearly sixty years of being forced, in order to survive, to accept official deception, lies and pretence are scarcely likely to improve the character either. Mr Kaiser is indeed aware of the effects of the economic and social systems when he points out how the projected economic reform of 1965, which would have allowed consumer interest to influence the quantity and nature of products by enterprises was, in effect, sabotaged by a natural preference for inertia at all levels, preservation of the inefficient but familiar system of the centralised plan.

There was a story current years ago about a Polish economist at an international conference of economists from both the East and the West, who, after listening to glowing self-praise for the successes of the Soviet economy from a Soviet delegate, passed up a note to a British colleague with the following words: 'If it is so good, why is it so bad?' The natural question prompted by Mr Kaiser's picture of the Soviet Union is: 'If it is so bad, why is it so good?' How can this ramshackle country – inefficient, dogmatically inimical to all fresh ideas, with a population that works without enthusiasm and accepts philosophically the many privations and inconveniences largely because it has lived through times so much worse that the present seems good by comparison – how has the Soviet Union achieved its world position, its frightening military strength, superior in many respects to that of Nato, its rapidly expanding navy, if it is such a shambles?

One is reminded of the second world war, of the time when Allied commanders were first allowed to visit the Soviet front. Nearly all the British officers, at any rate, came back appalled – an inefficient peasant army, primitive equipment, no adequate maps let alone rear services – how could such an army be victorious against a real modern army like the German? But it was. The answer, which was quite clear to those who studied the campaign at the War Office, was that the Soviet army was so successful precisely because it worked within the limitations of its human material. Sophisticated equipment would have been of little use to a peasant army. Soviet military operations were certainly wasteful of men but then there was a very large number of men available. Rear services were certainly primitive by West European, let alone American or Canadian standards. But to an army whose members were accustomed to make do with little all their lives, and who were encouraged to live off the land, this hardly mattered. So it is, *mutatis mutandis*, with the Soviet Union, (which is in many ways a projection of its armed forces) today.

I do not think Mr Kaiser would agree. He is far from dogmatic and is modestly diffident in his views. But he inclines to the belief that the answer to the question in the Polish joke is that the Soviet Union in fact is 'bad' and not 'good'; and that the West has consistently and repeatedly overestimated Soviet strength and thereby accelerated the arms race. He also inclines to the view which is very popular with those who flinch from facing the kind of reality of which Solzhenitsyn warns us repeatedly – albeit in language which is overcolourful for ready acceptance by an English audience. This is the view that basically the Soviet Union, or rather its leaders, are obsessed with defence and genuinely fear United States aggression; and that 'their ambitions are less grand than their words suggest'.

Well, Soviet leaders have included the destruction of the Western system in their programme since Lenin – without, of course, setting a timetable or indulging in 'grand designs', but merely by using all opportunities for advance as they occur – which possibly generates in the West the comforting feeling that if we wait long enough the Soviet ultimate aim will go away. It is not true that the Western powers have always overestimated Soviet strength. The first Strategic Arms Limitation Talks negotiators underestimated by years the Soviet capacity to produce MIRV warheads. At the present moment US government experts are revising their assessment of Soviet spending on arms production upwards by 200 per cent – and are still far short of Academician Sakharov's estimate.

No one would deny the importance which defence and security play in Soviet thinking. But I remain sceptical about the theory that the Soviet Union is genuinely afraid of US aggression. Soviet military analysts, it is true, occasionally point out that a preemptive strike may be the only way of forestalling imperialist aggression. One would have to be very naïve to infer

Among this week's contributors:

LEONARD SCHAPIRO is Professor of Political Science with Special Reference to Russian Studies at the London School of Economics. Among his publications are *The Communist Party of the Soviet Union* and *The Government and Politics of Socialist Russia.*

PAUL THEROUX's most recent novel, *The Family Arsenal*, has just been published.

DAVID HOLBROOK's *Lost Bearings in English Poetry* will appear later this year.

JULIAN BARNES and CRAIG RAINE are editing W. Holman Hunt's *Pre-Raphaelitism and the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood.*

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that they really believe in the possibility of such aggression. What has Angola to do with defence? Or a rapidly accelerated programme of building nuclear submarines? I repeat, Mr Kaiser is tentative rather than dogmatic, but I think he has omitted vital factors from his concluding analysis. This does not prevent his book – or the great bulk of it which is descriptive – from being a vivid, good-humoured, witty and lucid picture of Soviet society.

James Cameron

Ask the Rabbi

The Thirteenth Tribe by ARTHUR KOESTLER
Hutchinson £4.75

Arthur Koestler is a phenomenon; with something like two dozen major books under his belt his search is insatiable; more and more recondite matters must he pursue and worry down to their origins; more and more does he find fulfilment in remote ethnic archaeology. One stands amazed at such dedicated industry, seeing the creator of, say, *Darkness At Noon* (a tract for its times if ever there was one) busying himself with the resurrection of a Judeo-Turkish tribe of whom hardly anyone has been particularly aware since the days of Charlemagne.

You might assume that a meticulous chronicle of the Khazar people of Central Europe, with detailed multilingual sources, would not be a thing of irresistibly burning importance to the common reader of today, and you would be right. Yet so persuasively does Mr Koestler argue, so beguilingly does he write, that one follows this crushingly intricate and apparently wholly irrelevant history to the end, when the real point becomes clear.

These Khazar people, then, ruled the eastern edge of Europe between the Caucasus and the Volga from the seventh to the tenth centuries. They held a strategically key position at the gateway between the Black Sea and the Caspian. They were a buffer protecting Byzantium against the barbarians of the northern steppes, the Bulgars and Magyars and Russians. Even more significantly, they blocked the onslaught of the Arab invasion, and thus prevented the Muslim conquest of Eastern Europe. At the time, it seems, the Khan of the Khazars was diplomatically and militarily at least as important as Charles the Great. Without Mr Koestler, this is a fact that one reader at least could have gone to his grave without knowing.

The recurrent theme here is that the Khazars were the Third Force of their era, balanced between the two major world powers of the Eastern Roman Empire and the avalanche of Islam. It was a perilous situation, most ingeniously resolved. Faced with the Western insistence to become Christian and the Eastern pressure to become Muslims, the Khazars most pragmatically rejected both: they became Jews.

This appears to have happened about 740 AD. It was indeed a right turn-up for the Book. The Hungarian Marxist historian Dr Antal Bartha ('with obvious embarassment,' says Koestler) wrote:

> This official conversion, in defiance of Christian proselytising and the Muslim influence, to a religion which had no political power and was persecuted by nearly all, has come as a surprise to all historians concerned with the Khazars, and cannot be considered as accidental.

Whether any state religion could 'accidentally' convert officially to Judaism is a question that would occur only to a Hungarian Marxist. Most people would feel that these Khazars knew what they were up to: sandwiched between the Christian-Muslim threats they sensibly called a plague on both their houses and reached for the *varmolka*. That, however, is still not the point.

The great question is what happened to the Jewish Khazars after their empire fell in the 12th or 13th century. They turned up, it seems, all over the place – in the Crimea, Ukraine, Hungary, Poland, Lithuania. They emerged as modern times began wherever in Eastern Europe the greatest concentration of Jews was found. The suggestion therefore is that not impossibly the majority of eastern Jews, and hence of world Jewry, might be not of Semitic origin at all, but Khazar.

This is a pretty sensational hypothesis, and apparently up to now has been treated very delicately by Jewish historians. Mr Koestler goes boldly in:

> The large majority of surviving Jews in the world is of Eastern European – and thus perhaps mainly of Khazar – origin. If so, this would mean that their ancestors came not from the Jordan but from the Volga, not from Canaan but from the Caucasus, once believed to be the cradle of the Aryan race, and that genetically they are more closely related to the Hun and Magyar tribes than to the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Should this turn out to be the case, then the term 'anti-Semitism' would become void of meaning, based on a misapprehension shared by both the killers and their victims. The story of the Khazar Empire, as it slowly emerges from the past, begins to look like the most cruel hoax which history has ever perpetrated.

This will be a controversial matter in contemporary Jerusalem. Mr Koestler is obviously well aware of this, and has developed his thesis with much argument that could be held to be scientific, on the one hand, or simply obfuscatory on the other. Initially he traces the history of the Khazar Empire from the scant available sources:

> It is equally frustrating to inquire into the origins of the Huns, Alans, Avars, Bulgars, Magyars, Bashkirs, Burtas, Sabirs, Uigurs, Saragurs, Onogurs, Utigurs, Kutrigurs, Tarniaks, Kotragars, Khabars, Zabenders, Pechenegs, Ghuzz, Kumans, Kipchaks . . .

This gets a lot of mileage out of the MS but does not necessarily lead to much conclusion. Nevertheless, at the end of it we know a good deal more about the Khazars than we do about the Onogurs, Utigurs, Kutrigurs etc., which probably frustrates us less than Mr Koestler.

The second part, however, provides the right hook. This is where Mr Koestler – with fair restraint, let it be said – indicates that the bulk of world Jewry is of Khazar-Turkish, rather than Semitic, origin; that both history and anthropology refute the popular belief in a Jewish race descended from the biblical tribe. He argues that the belief in a 'Jewish type' is based on misconception, that there is a greater similarity between Jews and their Gentile environment than between Jews living in different countries. He illustrates this situation in the mysterious and for all I know scientific formula: $G_a - J_a < J_a - J_b : G_a - G_b \cong J_a - J_b$.

Ask the rabbi.

Mr Koestler says that the lingering image of Judaism's racial and historical message is based on illusion, appealing to tribal loyalty through the legend of a Chosen Race. He points out, correctly, that the native Israeli *sabra* represents, physically and mentally, the complete opposite of the 'typical Jew' bred in the ghetto, and with that phrase he ends his book. It seems an awfully long way round to prove the obvious.

Craig Raine

Reading Her Old Letter About a Wedding

On the envelope, a frowning postmark
Cancelling the familiar face.
Inside, only a day when I wasn't there:

A love-bite on the bride's young neck
Not quite hidden by her creamy collar,
'Like the mark left by a violin'.

Bridesmaids, three to one mirror,
Opening hairgrips with their teeth.
The bridegroom's spikey tuft of hair,

The best man crossing out his
opening gambit
('My Lewds, Labia and Genitalmen'),
The father tying his shoes with a
double-knot,

Then car horns and lavatories, lavatories,
And the old mother left behind, it says,
'Like Feers in *The Cherry Orchard*'.

This is the past: that tiny synagogue,
The trodden glass, photographers,
The college lawn in regency stripes,

A boy who oompah-ed to himself
Tromboning with a paper-clip,
A puppy's penis like a radish,

And you, for the first time suddenly tired . . .
The girl in a corner, forgetting everything
Except your face in the mirror –

Pale as the grass under a stone.
At the cemetery, I noticed how each rose
Grew on a shark-infested stem.

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Philip French

Westway

The New Golden Land by HUGH HONOUR *Allen Lane* £12.50
The Statue of Liberty by MARVIN TRACHTENBERG *Allen Lane* £8.00

Even before the landfalls of Columbus and Amerigo Vespucci challenged the cosmology of Renaissance man, America existed as a myth. It was Atlantis, Cockaigne, Avalon, the place beyond the sunset to which Tennyson's Ulysses intended to sail in the days before 'the baths of all the Western stars' came to connote the erotic ablutions of actresses in DeMille movies. The mere discovery of the new continent did not alter this mythical status. On the contrary, its power was greatly increased and for nearly five hundred years Europeans as diverse as More (*Utopia*) and Sartre (*The Respectful Prostitute*) have been projecting their hopes, fears and fantasies on America.

The role of America in the European consciousness is a complex affair and the British art historian Hugh Honour has tried to restrict himself to one part of its history – the depiction of the continent in general, and from the late 18th century the United States in particular, in the visual arts. His perceptive and handsomely illustrated book is a by-product of the bicentennial exhibition he arranged for the National Gallery in Washington. As Honour tells the story, reality rarely raises its prosaic head. From the exotic and erotic illustrations and embellishments to the earliest reports and maps up to David Hockney's equally exotic studies of the scenery and epicenery of California, America has been the springboard for bigger and better splashes – some of them into pretty murky pools of the subconscious. The principal exception to this general course was the recording of the astonishing New World flora and fauna – the development of systematic ornithology, biology and botany coinciding with, and being given impetus by, the early centuries of American discovery and exploration. Alexander von Humboldt, who saw the Continent plain and straight, belongs in this tradition; it is a pleasing irony that Saul Bellow should now have drawn him into the world of mythology.

At most times there have been two ideas at war in the European perception of America – one is of America as a threat to civilisation, the other is of the continent as a means of liberation from Old World restrictions and the bondage of the past. 'In the beginning all the World was America,' wrote Locke of these possibilities of new beginnings. Less sanguinely, later thinkers have reflected that in the future all the world will be America.

The confusion of these notions can be seen in the treatment of Indians in European art. 'Don't cant in defence of savages,' Johnson once admonished Boswell, a piece of advice rarely heeded before, since or at the time. In the 18th century visiting chieftains were invariably represented by British portrait painters in postures reserved for the depiction of English country gentlemen – beside a tree, hand on hip, stiffly holding a gun or bow. Earlier the dual nature of the savage, the notion of him dwelling in an evil Eden, is expressed in two 16th-century Portuguese paintings that Honour artfully juxtaposes: an Adoration where one of the Magi is a Brazilian native and a scene of agonised souls in a hell where the presiding devil is an American Indian. From the late 16th century onwards the enduring allegorical figure for North America became a nude Indian girl with a feathered headdress. In the mid-19th century this Indian maiden, with 'Liberty' inscribed on her headdress, replaced the bonnetted classical figure of liberty on American coinage, an act ringingly denounced by Marvin Trachtenberg as 'a feat of unsurpassed iconographic hypocrisy'.

In the 18th and 19th centuries the most talented American artists settled in Europe, though few European painters of note went to America. The only major 19th-century exception was Degas who visited relatives in New Orleans and had little difficulty in assimilating this particular city to his own world. Most European artists preferred to depict America without contaminating their vision by actual exposure to the land. Millet executed some commissions for pictures of US frontier life without leaving home; Rosa Bonheur also produced authentic Western scenes from Fontainebleau, where Buffalo Bill came to pose for an equestrian portrait. In fact the most confident observers have usually been people who never visited the country – Le Douanier Rousseau (who claimed unconvincingly to have served with the French army in Mexico), Hitler's favourite novelist, the Western author Karl May, and Franz Kafka, who put a sword in the Statue of Liberty's hand. Fritz Lang, who filmed *Metropolis*, his nightmare vision of the future, after a brief visit to New York in the 1920s, devoted himself to crime pictures, Westerns and low-life melodramas when he settled in the States, while his friend Brecht never touched on America once he'd lived there, though he'd written a number of allegorical plays with US settings before going.

The alarm, disturbance and distress that America has occasioned in so many European literary intellectuals during the past hundred years has not been reflected in the work of serious visual artists. Indeed, Mondrian, Léger, Ernst and most recently Kokoschka and the British pop artists have been exhilarated by the country, often celebrating the very aspects that repel their literary peers. So there is in Honour's book a certain clash between his text (where it attempts to make larger statements about European attitudes to America) and his pictures. There are also areas on which he scarcely touches. One is the iconography of cartoons; another is photography; a third is the way European artists differ stylistically from their European counterparts in, say, the handling of space and the organisation of figures within the canvas.

Hugh Honour is also responsible, through the 'Art in Context' series that he edits with John Fleming, for the appearance of Marvin Trachtenberg's *The Statue of Liberty*, an admirable monograph that takes in the his-

Gore Vidal

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tory of colossi, the 19th-century vogue for public monuments, and the 'deeply human urge to allegorical expression'. The idea for the statue came from the great French historian Lefebvre de Laboulaye and his Republican confrères who wanted to erect a monument to liberty in America as a deliberate (if to us now rather obscure) political act. They inspired the sculptor Frédéric Auguste Bartholdi who pursued his vision over a period of 16 years in the face of much adversity, and finally brought it to fruition with the assistance of the engineer Gustave Eiffel, for whose eponymous tower the infrastructure of Bartholdi's lovably vulgar colossus was a major preparation. Very soon after it was unveiled the title 'Liberty Enlightening the World' was dropped, the French connection was quietly forgotten, the potent symbolism was neutralised and the figure naturalised as a strident image of America itself. The face was actually based on that of Bartholdi's mother, a domineering lady who, as a citizen of Alsace, lived under German domination after the war of 1870.

As the author observes: 'Like an adopted child, the statue retained the hereditary physical form of its natural parents, but took its mature character from its foster home.' On relating the history of the Statue's European creation and subsequent American fate, Trachtenberg brings into sharp focus the major issues that Honour raises in *The New Golden Land.*

Claire Tomalin

Daddy's Girls

Nuns by MARCELLE BERNSTEIN *Collins* £4.95

Marcelle Bernstein has caught her nun just in time. She is dwindling, like the cowslip and the panda. In the early 1970s the number of Catholic nuns in the world fell by nearly 25 per cent. In America, nuns are now dating, 'out to dinner every night', wearing butterfly rings given them by boyfriends and frothy negligees of their own choosing, are even on the pill; ex-nuns are marrying right and left; one is an editor of *Glamour* magazine. In England the Carmelite sisters of Llandovery listen to *My Fair Lady* (their favourite LP) and felt obliged to send a message of support to Mrs Whitehouse, admitting that they don't actually watch TV themselves.

Vocations are dropping off all over the world, and although nun-running of poor Indian girls to Italian convents has been stamped on (if not out), many orders are now advertising in the press for postulants. For centuries nuns considered themselves brides of Christ; popular psychology has frightened them off this image, just as it has made them uneasy with their ritual penance. One Los Angeles community has made celibacy voluntary: 'We are not responsible for the personal life-style of our community members,' they say. It's not the sentiment or the language of St Teresa, but Marcelle Bernstein thinks it may be the price to be paid if the monastic idea is to survive. The commune and the convent are approaching a merger.

For several years she has travelled with a sharp and inquiring eye in pursuit of nuns, and she has come up with a first-rate piece of reporting. If she has not answered the question she started with – why do some women choose to become nuns? – it may be because she has felt the shallowness of one sort of answer and the impossibility of the other; and because, even as a non-Christian, she is unable to accept that nuns are all either dear, deluded creatures sacrificing their lives for the illusion of a reward in heaven, or else simply social workers in uniform. Psychologists and sociologists can describe but not entirely explain the religious impulse, the sense of election, the wish to order life in a particular way, to attempt emotional self-sufficiency, to serve without stint.

Miss Bernstein was impressed by this irreducible element, and she suggests that the contemplative orders are most likely to survive more or less as they are, whilst the working orders, who make up 94 per cent of all nuns, transform themselves or disappear. (On the other hand, troubled times and economic insecurity send more girls into convents, so they may yet have a revival.) She herself was drawn most strongly to the contemplatives, and her account of their blend of girlish sweetness and chilling ritual does compel the imagination. She describes, for instance, the burial of a Cistercian nun who has lived enclosed for perhaps 60 years: her sisters place her without coffin in the earth of their still-enclosed graveyard, cover her and press the ground with their own knuckles – a fit and powerful ceremony such as we mostly lack outside. Then, at quite another level, she explains that the working orders are exempt from tax while the contemplatives are not, since HM inspectors have yet to be convinced that the power of prayer is effective enough to be categorised as a charity.

Quick to note what's funny as well as the fascination of what's different, this book sends one back to Eileen Power's great *Medieval English Nunneries*, crammed with lively portraits of women greedy, quarrelsome, saintly and silly and (most memorably) the escapers and sufferers from the malady of *accidia* or melancholy. In those times, the nunnery could be 'career, vocation, prison or refuge': today, although an increasing number of older women apparently hope to find a refuge, they are not encouraged from within. In England and America at any rate there is no element of prison, since nuns are free to leave, and in America there are even organisations to help them if they do. Nuns are still, as they were in the middle ages, recruited largely from the well-to-do classes, but illegitimate, unmarriageable, deformed and idiot daughters are now dealt with in other fashions. Careers and single dignity exist outside; vocation has therefore become the only thing. Even here young women are increasingly unwilling to take vows for life. They are also embattled against male domination of the church, not slyly like the abbesses and prioresses of the past, but openly and militantly.

In France in the last century country people still sang *chansons de nonnes* whose words went back hundreds of years. Few of these expressed much enthusiasm for convent life, or any motive for entering other than the bullying of parents or the defection of a lover: '*Point de couvent, je ne veux, ma mère, C'est un amant qu'il me faut vraiment.*' No doubt that things are better as they are today, though I can't resist giving the words of a lyric quoted by Miss Bernstein to show that some of the old attitudes are not quite dead:

> Since to err is only human
> There's a whole lot on the slate
> That I'll have to make account for
> When I reach the golden gate.
>
> But then I'm not a worrying
> About the deeds I've done,
> I'll just whisper to St Peter:
> 'I'm the daddy of a nun.'

Published in Italy, this appears on postcards illustrated with the Pope's hand raised in blessing. It is said to be much in favour with Irish fathers.

David Leitch

Folie à Deux

Operation Menace by ARTHUR MARDER *Oxford* £7.50
The Guns of Dakar by JOHN WILLIAMS *Heinemann* £4.50

There is something almost sublime about the Anglo-Free French Dakar fiasco of September 1940. Not only did the cumbersome armada totally fail in its intention of making the Vichy garrison surrender (the allies being, literally, fog-bound). But, as these two highly competent studies show, the mission itself was almost entirely without point, based as it was on several grotesque misconceptions.

The most important of these was the notion that the place had to be captured to preempt the Germans. They in fact had no plans at all to occupy the place, and had actually pulled out their last man some six weeks earlier. As for the raid itself, it was doomed because apart from anything else de Gaulle perversely isolated himself from the British commanders in another ship, and the wireless naturally broke down.

Not at all the picture that Churchill's perfervid imagination had already painted of the operation:

> Dakar wakes up one morning, sad and uncertain. But behold, by the light of the rising sun, its inhabitants perceive . . . An immense fleet! A hundred war or transport vessels! Perhaps . . . the Governor . . . will wish, 'for honour's sake', to fire a few shots. But he will go no further. And that evening he will dine with you and drink to the final victory.

Magnificent words which, as de Gaulle wrote in *The Call to Honour* 'spurted up' from Churchill's 'desire and imagination'. Since the new Prime Minister had already,

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in his mind's eye, seen de Gaulle at his victory dinner, it is hardly surprising that he brushed aside the resounding and even sarcastic warning delivered by the Joint Planning Staff.

The Dakar plan, they said, 'could only succeed with the hearty cooperation of the enemy, which we did not think was a sound basis for planning'. Churchill was prepared to disregard even so categorical a verdict, so that there was no future in anyone pointing out, for example, that high tides made landings difficult, if not impossible, or that these waters were notorious for the coastal fogs of autumn. His pixilated dream called for 'the rising sun' and that was that. This Dakar speech, surely one of the ripest examples of the high Churchillian vein extant, is noticeably absent from the Prime Minister's own version of the operation's genesis (in *Their Finest Hour*). He simply notes a meeting with de Gaulle on 6 August.

The general's personal account, in *The Call to Honour,* spells out this fateful Downing Street meeting, including the vision of Dakar at dawn, in some detail. De Gaulle's intention is to emphasise that he was sceptical about the Churchillian rodomontade, but was a great enough man to perceive the core of genius hidden in the glittering prose. In fact, there was no such core. Rather Dakar seems to have been a case of something close to *folie à deux.* The idea very likely originated in the fertile mind of General Edward Spears and was quickly seized on by de Gaulle, who needed to bring off a coup urgently in order to establish his own legitimacy. From then on the French and British leaders were locked in a mutual fantasy, each one encouraging the other to yet greater heights of folly.

Professor Marder's account is much the better. He not only gives more detail, and quotes from a wider variety of sources, he is also aware that 'Operation Menace' was less tragic than farcical. The events defy the voice of the historian to imbue them with seriousness, and shifting from account to account one sees the validity of A. J. P. Taylor's view that 'the affair is only memorable because it provided material for Evelyn Waugh. And it was Waugh who first drew attention in *Men at Arms.* to the appalling security breach that was the prelude to 'Menace'. An airman on the Liverpool Docks dropped a parcel marked 'Most Secret. By Hand of Officer Only'. As a result thousands of leaflets, printed in red, white and blue, and headed '*Français de Dakar*', were scattered abroad on the breeze. Brigadier Ritchie-Hook's verdict, before even this set-back, has the grisly ring of truth:

> 'It's not much of a show we're going to,' he (quite illegally) confided to the not yet embittered Guy Crouchback. 'Place called Dakar . . . French Town in West Africa. Probably all boulevards and brothels if I know the French colonies . . . Anyway it's all froggy business. They think they'll get in without opposition.'

But no such luck. The fog that bedevilled the landings turned out to be providential, shielding the fleet from the impressive guns the garrison had at their disposal. The armada slunk away, leaving de Gaulle feeling like a man whose house has been shaken by an earthquake, and receives on his head 'the rain of tiles falling from the roof'.

The General never regained the confidence of Roosevelt, who probably wrongly, since Churchill was really the prime mover, blamed the Frenchman for the disaster. (De Gaulle had actually announced his destination while in the process of getting his tropical kit, a breach of security as nothing compared with some others, but it rankled with FDR.)

There was another unfortunate sequel to the affair – Sir Dudley North, in command at Gibraltar, was blamed for the so-called 'escape' of the Vichy fleet which broke out of the Mediterranean via the straits. It influenced the outcome not at all. Again Marder's account is the most detailed, although in this instance the conclusion by John Williams is clearer.

North, as he himself insisted for so long, was indeed a scapegoat. The evidence is contained in a letter signed 'WSC' and sent to the Admiralty as early as 20 July:

> It is evident that Admiral Dudley North has not got the root of the matter in him, and I should be very glad to see you replace him by a more resolute and clear-sighted officer.

It was a time, Churchill believed, for visionaries.

Suzanne Lowry

Star Trek

Change Lobsters and Dance by LILLI PALMER
W. H. Allen £5.00

Noël Coward used to refer playfully to Lilli Palmer and Marlene Dietrich as his two Prussian cows. 'The only difference between the two of you,' he would say to Miss Palmer reproachfully, 'is that Marlene always carries my suitcase when she meets me at the airport.' In her autobiography Lilli Palmer reveals herself as distinctly unbovine, not overly Prussian and possessed of enough independence of mind to carry her own suitcase, if no one else's. She is not coy about pictures of herself as a fat and friendly 17 (Alexander Korda told her she would look a lot better in ten years, and he was right). Alongside she gives a moving account of her early life and career, first in Berlin and then as a Jewish refugee from Hitler's Germany in Paris and London.

Later she became an admired actress, although she was never a star of the same intensity as her husband, Rex Harrison. This may be why her book is a much cooler and more detached document than the usual run of movie memoirs. It is also better and more thoughtfully written. She emerges as the strong woman who supported Rex through the ostracism of Hollywood society after the suicide of a besotted starlet. She and Rex would curse gossips Hedda Hopper and Louella Parsons collectively as 'Lulu Popper'. To Lilli, Louella appeared as a very old tadpole. To Rex she was an alcoholic illiterate. He wasn't forgiven for

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that, but his later success effectively squashed the sanctimonious opprobrium – as his generous ex-wife is happy to record.

She also records her role in the trauma over her divorce from Rex and his marriage to the dying Kay Kendall. Lilli Palmer agreed to return to him after Kay's death, but with no intention of doing so. This bogus pact earned the wrath of Noël Coward: 'Are you by any chance enjoying yourself in this penny dreadful? The only help you'll get from me, old girl, is a good hiding.' In happier days the Harrisons knew the Windsors and entertained them at Portofino. It is nice to know that Wallis ('if she had been hungry she might have taken a bite out of you') thought Katharine Hepburn should play her part if an abdication film was ever made. The Duke fancied Rex as himself. Lilli introduced the Duchess to Greta Garbo. The Duchess immediately wanted to give a party for the star on board the Windsor yacht. 'I have no dress,' murmured Greta. 'Then it will be an informal party,' countered Wallis. Both knew, according to Lilli, that they were legends of the 20th century.

Lilli Palmer encountered an even more potent legend in the 90-year-old George Bernard Shaw. Years before Rex Harrison played Professor Higgins, Lilli Palmer played in *Caesar and Cleopatra*. She went to ask Shaw's permission first, armed with a warning from Vivien Leigh not to step on to the balcony steps with him alone unless she wanted her bottom pinched. But GBS contented himself with forbidding her to eat even one pea from his vegetable garden and inveighing against Sophocles's want of a sense of humour. 'Why should that fellow Oedipus get into such a state when he finds out that he's married to his mother? It should have added to his affection.'

Lilli Palmer maintains that she was a non-drinking observer at Hollywood parties, 'a dreary Teutonic wet blanket'. Perhaps this is why she remembers them so well.

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Paul Theroux

Marxist

Vinegar Puss by S. J. PERELMAN *Weidenfeld* £3.95

It is amazing, not to say criminal, that these greedy islands, the *gula* archipelago so to speak, feast so mightily on old Marx Brothers films without even a nod to the chef. A little research on my part has revealed that none of S. J. Perelman's 18 previous books is in print in Britain, though there is a rumour that *Crazy Like a Fox* is circulating here in an American paperback. So much for his 50 years of conscientiously manufacturing laughing gas, and in this sense he bears some resemblance to his opposite number in Britain, 'Beachcomber' – indeed, everything that Richard Ingrams wrote in the preface to his superb collection *The Best of Beachcomber* applies to Perelman in America. In their respective countries, each man has been a shaping force of comedy, and every joke, wisecrack or gag originating in America is deeply indebted to the man who wrote, 'I've got Bright's disease, and he has mine'.

In High School I wrapped a copy of *The Song of Hiawatha* around *The Road to Miltown* and sat happily for hours, only occasionally betraying my true occupation by bursting out laughing. The teacher accused me of a lack of reverence, and then suggested I needed my engine tuned when I said I was tickled by 'Gitchee-Goomee'. But I might have claimed I was preparing myself for the literary life in such pieces – Perelman has always referred to them as his *feuilletons* – as 'The Importance of Healing Ernest' (Hemingway in Africa), 'Second-Class Matter' (*The Naked Lunch* played for laughs, but predating Mr Burroughs's book by 30 years), or the scores of playlets, any one of which might be set at 'The Mabbot street entrance of nighttown'. It is only a stone's throw from the shenanigans of Joyce to the hijinks of Perelman, and if parody is, as I believe, the subtlest form of literary criticism, then a piece such as 'Anna Trivia Pluralised' in *Baby, It's Cold Inside* (1970) is all Perelman needs for his directorship in that large corporation known as Joycean Studies.

Over the last decade, Mr Perelman has announced that he is engaged on his autobiography, tentatively titled *The Hindsight Saga*, but he has always been the most autobiographical of writers. It only looks like fantasy, and though he had *New Yorker* readers in stitches over his series 'Small-Bore in Africa' his descriptions of the seldom-visited Island of Lamu and the palavering in Nairobi are wonderfully exact. In his latest book, we are treated in a six-part ramble ('Around the Bend in Eighty Days') to the delights of Jaipur, Lahore, Rangoon, Hong Kong and an excursion in Turkey. Later, taking his cue from a particularly fatuous passage in Charles Carrington's biography of Kipling, and egged on by a newspaper item about a man who writes three film-scripts a week, Perelman produces the diary of Patrick Foley de Grandeur and summarily kicks the slats out of anyone who believes that velocity is the key to writing.

'Razzle-dazzle in the Rib Room' is pure Marx Brothers, which is to say pure Perelman, and the rest of the pieces are populated by such memorable villains as Gonifson (a smattering of Yiddish is as helpful in reading Perelman as Joyce), Julius Wolfbane, the Burmese U Glib and the Chinese Matzo Tongue. Here is a memory, too, of Avrom Goldbogen, whose shoes were later filled and vacated by Richard Burton or, as Perelman describes him, 'better known to the world of entertainment and various referees in bankruptcy as Michael Todd'. Perelman has never written better than in *Vinegar Puss*, and this is high praise; he is incomparable, the hard act he has to follow is his own, and since there is no sign yet of *The Hindsight Saga*, a bumper book of Perelmania is long overdue.

Martin Fagg

Self-Detonating

Edmund Kean: Fire From Heaven by RAYMUND FITZSIMONS *Hamish Hamilton* £5.25

One way of boring the briefs off everyone in anecdotal distance used to be the minute recollection of Great Nights in the Theatre. With Irving and Bernhardt snugly in their urns, their prowess could safely be used to pygmy the poor players of latterday. With film now to qualify retrospective rapture, it isn't so easy to get away with this irritatingly irrefutable brand of eulogy.

No book on a pre-20th-century actor can tell us the one thing we really want to know: what was a performance by Garrick, Siddons, Macready, Kemble – or whoever – really like? Raymund FitzSimons would not, I hope, take it amiss if we swapped his book for half an hour's videotape of quintessential Kean. Richard III's first soliloquy; the Third Act of *Othello*; and, most mesmeric of all, Overreach's mad scene in *A New Way to Pay Old Debts*. 'This,' conjectures Mr FitzSimons,

> was probably the most powerful exhibition of human passion that has ever been witnessed upon an English stage . . . his ravings were so frenzied that many in the audience thought he must surely be possessed by the devil.

Hysteria was not confined to the audience, where, amid squads of ululating women, even a spectator as inured to high passion as Byron went off into a convulsive fit. The cast too were prostrated by the eruption of so much maniacal emotion. The comedian Munden, no friend of Kean, 'stood transfixed' and went round afterwards dazedly murmuring, 'My God! Is it possible?'

We just have to take their word for it that it *was* – but the tantalisation is great.

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Although the main lines of the Edmund Kean story are familiar, Mr FitzSimons has usefully extended them, notably in drawing on the diaries of James Winston, appointed 'acting manager' at Drury Lane in 1819. Poor chap, he had a rugged time of it, his ordeal peaking in 1825 when the two big shots at the Lane – Elliston the lessee and Kean the star – were competing in advanced dementia. Elliston, swamped in debt and booze and fearful of imminent arrest for perjury, was far gone in fugue – alternately euphoric or maudlin; while Kean was barely *compos* with drink, rage and syphilis. By now, he was way down the declining slope on which he'd embarked virtually on the morrow of his breakthrough. Just before, he'd told his wife, Mary: 'If I should succeed now, I think it would drive me mad.' It did.

It's a wonder he *ever* made it. At 26, penniless, drinking uncontrollably and bereaved of an adored elder son, he was still hacking round the shires, obliged to be Harlequin but yearning to be Hamlet. At last – the offer from Drury Lane, desperately trying out a whole series of provincial hopefuls, trusting that *one* rustic tragedian would pull the theatre out of financial deep water. But even then postal sloth was mucking up people's lives and arrangements. By the time the dilatory letter arrived, penury had forced Kean to close with a lesser offer. The imbroglio brought about by his forgivable wish to wriggle free of this earlier engagement nearly dished him for ever.

Eventually though, on 26 January 1814, he trudged through the slush from his lodgings and, spurning the star dressing-room, dressed with the rest of the cast – resigned to seeing yet another big-headed hick get the bird. With contemptuous amusement, they saw him putting on a black wig and beard instead of the traditional Shylock red . . . Half an hour later, those of them still in the green room were astounded at the applause reverberating from the auditorium; and, next morning, Hazlitt was writing of 'the first gleam of genius breaking athwart the gloom of the Stage'. Kean was lucky in his critics; and it is to them that one returns after tiring of the vindictive paranoia and ever-mounting megalomania that inevitably make up so much of the tale.

The surprise is not that Kean couldn't learn a single new line by his late thirties and died, utterly sacked in mind and body, at 45. The miracle is that, in view of the titanic assaults on his constitution, he lasted so long. Auto-destruct mechanisms were ticking merrily away even before his debut. Not even *his* extraordinary resilience could indefinitely survive the staunching of appetites which determined the duration of intervals solely by the length of time it took him to serve the relays of whores who solaced his dressing-room. Ration: one per intermission.

Scanning Hazlitt and the others in the hope of isolating the unique Kean quality, one gauges that his performances were not simply discharges of 'pure feeling' but – for their day – supremely intelligent. His violent mutations of mood, pace and pitch threw some audiences at first, but they were soon pinned by the vehement, often torrential naturalism that was plainly his own outright invention.

Great acting phosphorises areas of text that the student eye passes inertly over. Long-familiar lines throb then with sudden new immediacy of meaning. Kean, by his 'effects', irradiated whole neglected aspects of parts and plays – for instance, voicing the last word in 'I'll call thee Hamlet – king – father' with an intense vibratory pathos that threw the entire filial angle of Hamlet's predicament into quick sharp relief.

Mr FitzSimons's biography is diligent, lucid and temperate – if almost too self-effacing. In his pages one is still warmed by the glow of what was obviously a quite incomparable incandescence.

Derek Mahon

Brakes

The Eden Express by MARK VONNEGUT *Cape* £3.50

In flight from the 'shit-storm apocalypse' of urban America, Mark Vonnegut, son of Kurt, recent college graduate and draft reject, left his comfortable home in Barnstable, Massachusetts, in July 1970, and headed north-west. Accompanied by girlfriend Virginia and dog Zeke, he drove his beat-up VW to British Columbia in search of Eden, and found it, with surprising ease, at a place called Powell River, 80 miles north of Vancouver, romantically and symbolically situated off the end of Highway 101, which starts in Panama and comes up through California. It was an old farm of 80 acres, accessible only by boat and

> more beautiful than our wildest dreams. Lush blackberries ripening, apple trees with green fruit. A stream ran right by the house. There were trout in the stream, old harnesses and hardware in a shed . . .

They take it and put the word out. Kindred spirits arrive from Vancouver, from Berkeley, from back East. In no time there is a little community going: Simon, Kathy, Jack, Steve, Sandy, Luke. But Mark is the head man, an aristocrat of the spirit as he more than once concedes (he majored in Religion); and it is his version of Eden that prevails. 'Push-ups and football were out, yoga and frisbee were in. Hamburgers were out, soybeans and brown rice were in.' What were they looking for? 'Ego death, mystic oneness with all things.'

They fell trees for firewood, rebuild the front porch, grind flour, raise goats, make music, discuss folk medicine and astrology and take a very serious interest in one another's sex lives. More than anything else, they want to be 'good hippies'; and so they are. For a few months all goes well. They survive the not very severe West Coast winter. There are moments of lyrical delight, as when Mark sits on the roof after a hard day and, 'far from New York City's recording studios', plays his tenor saxophone to the stars. And then, as if to out-Eden Eden, he decides to take a mescalin trip.

Mark and drugs, he confesses, never really got on together; but, so far from the shit-storm, his mind at peace, he thinks he can handle it. Disaster. Faces. Visions. Incoherent ravings. He stops eating, sleeping. The others are sympathetic. They watch and wait. 'Schizophrenia is a sane response to an insane society': they will not hand over this saintly brother to the hard hats and white coats of rational psychic oppression: that would be 'brakes' on his express ride to enlightenment. But when his condition turns critical he is rushed to hospital in Vancouver and placed under sedation: thorazine, an 'anti-heroic' drug. His parents arrive. He slowly recovers. On his release, he revisits the farm to find 'heavy vibes'. They have a tractor now. A sadder and a wiser man, he takes his leave. The last we see of him he is back in Boston, financially dependent on his parents and 'trying to get into medical school'.

The book has two great faults. One is the author's inability to see what an unattractive figure he himself presents in the early stages of the narrative. Here is this privileged youngster, elitist, priggish and humourless, his head full of conventional catch-phrases, despising 'people who do boring jobs in ugly places' and yet unblushingly candid about his own financial resources. (His share of the purchase price of Eden was 7,000 dollars.) Like most people, he has little regard for Richard Nixon, yet blandly mentions in passing that he had to use 'political pull' to get himself off the hook in a possession-of-drugs case. The other fault is his failure (for one who

"A very fine piece of popular history which pulls together the whole affair succintly and readably." – *John Gittings, The Guardian*

BRIAN INGLIS

The Opium War

"Mr. Inglis has given us a brisk, lucid and detailed account . . . and has raised many questions in my mind. I find him entirely convincing." – *Philip Mason, The Spectator*

"Much work has gone into Brian Inglis' OPIUM WAR, but with the research has gone an equal capacity for arrangement and organisation. The result is a strong, severe book, with no frills, no loud cries, no extravagances, which puts it in the market of those who like their reading to be real reading rather than amateur dramatics. The subject is so dramatic that Mr. Inglis's tight treatment is just what it needs."
£5.25 – *Nigel Dennis, Sunday Telegraph*

Hodder & Stoughton

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majored in Religion) to follow through the implications of his theological metaphor. He and Virginia go 'naked into the woods to build a new society', and having reached the first plateau eat of the mescalin Tree of Knowledge. Meanwhile Mark has missed (as an earlier BC Edenist, Malcolm Lowry, would not have missed) the significance of the 'garter snakes and friendly toads' about the place. Has he never heard of Original Sin? And is not his own 'sin', in relishing and seeking to disembody his contentment, in underestimating phenomenal reality, the one Auden picks out in *New Year Letter*?

> Hell is the being of the lie
> That we become if we deny
> The laws of consciousness and claim
> Becoming and being are the same,
> Its fire the pain to which we go
> If we refuse to suffer . . .

In the end, of course, he *does* suffer; and his description of 'schiz' is vivid and frightening. For this reason alone, the book is worth reading. But there's another reason. It would be easy, yet a mistake, to dismiss Mark and his barely distinguishable friends as a bunch of rather solemn adolescents with little to teach and much to learn. The fact that they are all white Swarthmore graduates of middle-class background detracts from the commune's possibilities as a microcosm of the future, but for all the naïveté and exclusiveness a certain sweet nobility shines through. Like others everywhere, they were on to something; and the fact that it didn't work, or worked in a way they didn't foresee, is nothing to be ashamed of. 'Maybe everyone's part hippie now,' says Mark, 'so that really good full-time hippies aren't needed any more. It's what the good hippies wanted all along anyway.'

David Holbrook

Aberystwyth

We stay for a week by the sea
Beyond the Cambrian Mountains.
All along the valleys, the burnt trees,
Lovely October flames, the bracken brown,
Birches cindery sparks, larches gold fluff.
But these are not the images that stay
Haunting my mind still, nor the audiences
Silently attentive as I speak so drily:
Nor even you, smiling at my table,
Your green eyes full of life and love.
What I remember is the long linear waves
Driving in gently from the Irish Channel
And then rising, glassy and mysterious:
Like a thin wall out of each swell, breaking
At their ends, and this playful froth
Spuming along the crest in the wind
Poised, so delicately poised, bearding over,
While above the whole cylindrical curve
A fine spray dances in the air all ways.

So, the waves come in, one by one by one,
As I watch from my window, a great pulse
Of the grey sea, riding in towards me.

That is what I remember, as the days
grow dark.

Julian Barnes

Zion Tamers

Passions and Other Stories by ISAAC BASHEVIS SINGER *Cape* £3.95
In the Beginning by CHAIM POTOK *Heinemann* £4.50
Sunset Village by FRANK SARGESON *Martin Brian & O'Keeffe* £3.00
Hollywood and LeVine by ANDREW BERGMAN *Hutchinson* £3.50

In 'Two Markets', one of this consistently fine collection of stories, Isaac Bashevis Singer evokes a Jewish fruit market in the Poland of his youth, its haggling and gabbling, and the lively, cunning hunchback who was one of its star turns. Years later, walking through Tel Aviv and lamenting its modernity, he turns into a sidestreet and 'with the suddenness of a dream or a mirage' sees an exactly similar market: the same voices and smells, and even the same hunchback. 'The truth is not ashamed of appearing contrived,' comments Singer; and while the tale offers a clear message about the continuity of Zion, it also spotlights one of Singer's favourite zones.

Here, the quotidian blurs into the supernatural; here, sex, for instance, often has an element of vampirism. A chance meeting with a publisher's wife in Portugal confronts a writer with a 'reincarnation' of his first love, shot by the Nazis; an ugly schoolgirl enslaves her teacher after claiming to kill off his wife with a spell. In both cases, one can take events either way: the supernatural motif is not so much a key as another strand in an ambiguous weave. In 'Hanka', the author, lecturing in Argentina, is asked to clarify his attitude to the occult: has he, for example, ever seen a spirit? 'All my experiences,' he replies, 'have been ambiguous. None of them could serve for evidence. Just the same, my belief in spirits becomes even stronger.' This civil, though qualified, straightforwardness is typical of Singer's writing. His experiences may be sophisticated, and his forms vary from folksy yarning to smart onion-peeling, but 'clarity remains the ambition of this writer'; and his conclusions, if ironic and touched with the bitter wisdom of one whose race has been decimated, are never evasive. *Passions* enlarges his distinctly flavoured memorial to the Yiddish-speaking Jews of Poland, a strange minority within a minority; though anyone apprehensive that his work might be inbred should start with 'Old Love', a gentle yet pitiless study, set in a Miama condominium, of a brief rage against the dying of the light.

Tough competition, then, for Chaim Potok, who follows growing up Jewish in Brooklyn in the Fifties (*The Promise*) with growing up Jewish (and Polish-Jewish at that) in the Bronx in the Thirties and Forties. A trifle Brucknerian in pace, and told completely straight except for a closing flicker of fantasy, this novel about a Jewish brainbox puzzling at the irrationality of history, turns out unexpectedly moving. Partly, one suspects, because the European holocaust, which shadows the lives of the whole community, is kept offstage and reflected in microcosm: the street-corner humiliations, the tough gangs of goyim forcing copies of *Social Justice* on Semitic-looking schoolboys, offer much more controllable leverage on our emotions than say, being slugged with Belsen. It is this careful focus which ensures that the conclusion works. With five million dead in Europe and a race about to make a new beginning, a decision to abandon orthodox Jewish study and see what goyische learning has to offer might seem less than a climax. It is a measure of Mr Potok's plausibility and characterisation that the act (viewed as treachery by the community) comes across as necessary, heroic, and loya to a deeper Jewish tradition.

It's a toss-up whether *Sunset Village* is a neat piece of mimesis or a sign that Frank Sargeson, the doyen of New Zealand letters, is seizing up. The rambly intros ('It was for all that not much to be doubted that. . . .'), the lumpish adjectives ('the huge clumsy-appearing man'), the gnarled raillery at 'any young man-woman in unisex clothing' and 'up-to-date language (e.g., astonishingly, the suffix '-wise'), al make it a knotty 90-pager. Flaubertian or sclerotic, I wondered, since the narrative is stylistically indistinguishable from the passages of reported thought. The village is a pensioners' settlement where the usua passions of lust, envy, gossip and murder still run amuck. As the police probe the death of a sprightly widow, it emerges that most of the golden-agers are unwittingly related to one another. *Why?* seemed to be a fair (though unanswered) question. At the end, one of them is had up for indecency, but the judge checks out with heart failure just before the trial. Again one wondered, why? Could it, I began to fear, all be some ghastly allegory?

Andrew Bergman's *The Big Kiss-Off of 1944* was school-of-Chandler but with a verve of its own. The same shade animates his second novel, but Mr Bergman jokily distances it. 'You read Raymond Chandler much, or Hammett?' an excited lady librarian asks his bald, sweating shamus Jack LeVine. 'Do you read about libraries?' he grunts back to her squealing satisfaction The ground-rules remain unchanged: private dick incorruptible on large issues but malleable on small ones gets leaned on by tired cops who are vice versa; alternate knockouts come from villains and the red-headed widow mixing the highballs. The zappy cynicism and drily over-the-top writing are of equally unmistakable parentage. Mr Bergman's contribution is to make the plotting less dense (a relief, as Chandler was often too choked), and provide a fresh background – here, Hollywood and the HUAC investigations. LeVine finds an old school friend dangling from a gallows on the Warner Brothers lot, and the trail leads to FBI involvement and badly-tailored young Congressman R. M. Nixon (where else, nowadays). Mr Bergman's knowledge of the movie business (he co-wrote *Blazing Saddles*) helps a lot, and the presence of H. Bogart in the final reel (where he's reduced to acting as LeVine's chauffeur) indicates the lightness of tone

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Theatre

Benedict Nightingale

In a Minor Key

Evening Light and **Once Upon a Time** *Bristol*
Romeo and Juliet *Stratford*

As I trekked from Bristol theatre to Bristol theatre last week, a line from *The Seagull* kept bothering my braincells: 'It's all very clever and charming, but if you've been reading Tolstoy or Zola, you don't feel like reading Trigorin.' So it is with Aleksei Arbuzov, enterprisingly imported to Avonside in bulk – a British premiere at the Theatre Royal, another at the Little, a revival of *The Promise* at the New Vic. If you've been seeing Chekhov or Gorki, or even Mayakovski and Babel, you aren't likely to feel like seeing him, for all his charm, deftness and graceful command of the sweetly-sad. In *Once Upon a Time*, a girl tells her elderly admirer that she hopes to change her name to Balyasnikov, meaning she'll marry his son: when the father misunderstands her, and dewily refuses her supposed offer out of regard for her youth, she ups and leaves both town and fiancé, rather than disillusion the old boy with the truth. That's the sort of touching encounter that sends Arbuzov's pen pirouetting across the blank paper, leaving behind patterns few other playwrights could begin to match in the perhaps unlikely event of their wanting to do so. He is a master of the minor effect, the Trigorin of whatever happens to pass for Shaftesbury Avenue in modern Moscow.

Would he be a more impressive dramatist if he were not subject to the Soviet system of censorship and suppression? I hardly think so. He is tolerated because he is naturally and effortlessly tolerable. Spleen does not well up in his throat, to be choked back with a resolute twist of the lips. At any rate, the season at Bristol leaves its audience with no sentiments that could be described as the least challenging or combative, and no evidence that Arbuzov is itching to express any. He tells us that life is sometimes sad, but always worthwhile. That the opportunity is usually there to make a fresh start, if only one is brave enough to seize it. That loneliness is a bane, love a good, and people matter to one another, no matter how uneasy their relationships. That a little human eccentricity adds colour to life. That the old can be grasping and egocentric, and should learn to appreciate a younger generation that does, after all, hold the future in trust. The photo in the composite programme of a dumpy, greying, mildly grinning figure in a leather jacket seems entirely appropriate. It is hard to imagine Arbuzov writing *The Aristocrats*, that notorious tribute to the power of the Cheka over 'deviationists', but you couldn't conceive of him producing an *August 1914* or even a *Bedbug*.

Not that his work is altogether apolitical. *The Promise*, you may recall, is about the erosion of the togetherness of the second world war and of the optimism of the period just afterwards; and *Evening Light*, which opened in Russia only last year, describes the palaver on a local paper when the deputy editor uses his staid boss's absence to attack the district council for chopping down forests and uprooting flowers. But this newshound's crusade is pretty timid by Western standards, and his stand not even very controversial, as *Iszvestia* proves by publishing an article supporting the conservationists and denouncing the bureaucratic vandals. What small-town apparatchiks do may be open to criticism, but what Moscow says is truth and law: the orthodox conclusion. In any case, Arbuzov's object seems less to celebrate the people's watchdogs in their public guises than to show them in their private lives – bickering, flirting, falling in love, finding themselves, losing themselves, maturing, ossifying; and doing all those things that belie revolutions, defy iron curtains and make humanity one. It is stitched together like crochetwork, with care and affection and not a lot of passion or depth: Trigorin once again, never quite justifying the emotional value he puts on his characters or the attention he claims for them – 'a good writer, but not as good as Turgenev'.

But it is a chance for Richard Cottrell to direct sensitively, John McMurray to paint some limpid backcloths of the Volga, and Daniel Massey to crash through the main part, all ebullient temper and confused conscience. Similarly, only more so, *Once Upon a Time* belongs to Michael Hordern, a world-weary puppeteer restored to emotional health by Felicity Kendal, who has come from Leningrad to Moscow 'to provide the women of the Soviet Union with lovely clothes – to make them beautiful, graceful and seductive'. This seems a worthy and somewhat overdue aspiration, and in many plays it would take precedence over any private one. To an Anglo-Saxon dramatist, you'd expect it to represent Women's Lib, the primacy of career: to a Soviet one, social purpose, dedication to the common weal. But Arbuzov is politically null when he's not being politically dull, and to him it is unimportant beside his characters' personal entanglements, notably a running quarrel between the grouchy marionette-man and his edgy, difficult son. The little dressmaker reconciles the combatants, bravely renounces both of them herself, and then returns to obscurity in Leningrad, leaving us to shed a sympathetic tear or two at their revived affection and her self-sacrifice.

It's an odd conclusion, which some might deplore as irresponsible and others applaud for its high rating of individual emotion. Some may find it a bourgeois cop-out, others a welcome reassurance that Soviet art need not always serve the state. Unluckily, I cannot join this weighty debate, for the simple reason that neither the characters nor their fate mattered very much to me. It struck me as a sentimental ending – and a one-bar play, designed to warm the heart with the minimum of dramatic electricity and human energy. But it does allow Mr Hordern to snuffle, mutter, and hum to himself in his own inimitable voice, scratching his inimitable hair and shedding his inimitable dandruff as he potters about the stage. More, it lets him try less familiar things – a half-melancholy, half-shifty look as he touches Miss Kendal, a sudden roar of distress as he contemplates his dwindling appeal and disappearing life. Arbuzov may be a minor talent, interesting mainly as an example of what makes box-offices buzz in Moscow; but he's given a British actor the opportunity to show us something rarely seen in the theatre and not often discussed outside it, the sexual embarrassment and anguish of the elderly.

There's more than the expected quota of sex in Trevor Nunn's *Romeo and Juliet*, too. When Ian McKellen first slouches in, pale, sickly and slack-jawed, it's clear his mind is on one thing – and so urgently on it that you quite expect him to grab the first female passer-by and have her, there, on the stage. His Romeo is a libido in search of an object, which presents itself in Francesca Annis's Juliet, a giggly adolescent with some sharp drives of her own. The trouble, of course, is that most of their conversation is decorative and romantic, poetry of the head rather than the groin: when they meet, their first 14 lines add up to an elaborate sonnet, and their parting is hardly less precious. But McKellen does what he can to inject post-Freudian wisdom into Elizabethan euphuism, at one point actually lying on his back and simulating an orgasm. His love rather literally 'pricks like thorn'. Altogether, this Romeo is an obsessive, driven boy, incapable of patience or repose, equally unstoppable whether his aim is sex or death: an exciting performance, if at times too emphatic for what has surprisingly become a pretty intimate auditorium at Stratford.

As the season proceeds, I'll doubtless have more to say about Mr Nunn's wooden O, with its balconies and watching faces at the back. But absence of scenery hasn't prevented him creating a very furious, volatile Verona, full of swirling figures with swords, and dominated by John Woodvine's brutal Capulet and Michael Pennington's hectic, half-mad Mercutio. The interpretation seems indebted to Terry Hands's recent production of the play, which tried to turn a chapter of unhappy accidents into a mature tragedy by presenting Romeo and Juliet, not as innocent victims of the stars, but as flawed protagonists, as immoderate in their love as others in their hate. But Mr Nunn makes the point less insistently, and is also luckier in his lovers, especially his Romeo. As I recall, Timothy Dalton sometimes seemed to be just another symptom of a violent society, of no great interest or importance in himself: you couldn't say that of McKellen. He is the indisputable centre of an authoritative production.

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Music

Bayan Northcott

Et In Orcadia

Maxwell Davies: The Blind Fiddler *QEH*

It was about half way through my second hearing last Friday of Peter Maxwell Davies's new 45-minute song cycle that I began to sense something vaguely familiar behind its manifold turns of phrase. Only in the last seconds, however, was that something unmistakably revealed, high in the violin part, as the pentecostal plainsong, *Veni, Creator Spiritus.* In fact, *The Blind Fiddler* turns out to be structured upon the same medieval principles of cantus firmus, canon and proportional rhythm as Davies has deployed from the beginning of his career. Yet the actual character of the music – meditative, atmospheric, immensely slow – sounds utterly remote both from the crabbed, pietistic impersonality of his early instrumental motets and Latin settings and from the parodistic violence of his theatre pieces in the late Sixties when it seemed for a time that he might turn into a kind of musical Francis Bacon. To create the impression of three distinct styles out of the same materials is remarkable enough; what has struck me, studying the latest score, is the extent to which the new style arises from a combination, a resolution even, of the earlier ones.

Davies's revival of medieval techniques always implied a wider regret for a lost socio-cultural unity, so that his migration to a still relatively simple, pre-industrial community and landscape such as the Orkneys could well have been predicted. But to encounter there a writer whose outlook and aesthetic so completely complemented his own as George Mackay Brown was indeed a stroke of creative luck. In *From Stone To Thorn* (1971), Davies's first Mackay Brown setting, the intricately dry accompaniments and the banshee-like tintinnabulations of that strange percussion instrument, the flexatone, still suggested the incompatibility of his two earlier manners. With *Dark Angels* (1973), a pair of soprano elegies linked by a guitar interlude, he suddenly achieved a lyrical, almost Britten-like simplicity – but a simplicity rich in the kind of overtones that only arise from many levels of style and meaning working in phase. *Fiddlers at the Wedding* (1973-4), a setting of four poems with interludes, creates an even more evocative ambience from a fragile ensemble of alto flute, mandoline, guitar and a percussion section including such rare resonances as rubbed brandy bowls.

The further enlargement of scale in the 14 linked songs and interludes of *The Blind Fiddler* (1975) almost invites comparison with an earlier expanding sequence of works, the two *Taverner Fantasias* and *Worldes Blis* for orchestra which dominated Davies's output in the Sixties. The text of the new cycle is drawn from Mackay Brown's play, *A Spell for Green Corn*, in which the reincarnations of an Orkney fiddler down the ages suggests, among other things, the fortunes of the community. The work has its violent side, as when the wild outbursts of folk fiddling in the interludes revive the Dance of Death horrors of the earlier Davies. But many of the settings are so fine-spun and thinly scored as to risk sounding desultory in a performance of less than maximum concentration. Yet the salient impression of last Friday's London premiere by Mary Thomas and the seven players of The Fires of London under the composer, was the way the music seemed to respond to every level of meaning in the text at once.

Without resorting to gratuitous 'sound-painting', Davies has managed to match Mackay Brown's concrete imagery of fishing and crofting with a continual suggestion of wind, distant surf and huge distances – a remarkable achievement with such tiny instrumental forces. But the text also shows a characteristic involvement with ritual and number symbolism, in this instance, with the seven days of creation, the seven deadly sins and an implied drama about seven fishing boats (one fails to return). The plainchant upon which Davies has based his substructure also yields, when divested of its repeated pitches, a melodic shape of seven notes – and so it appears all over his score. Whether the reclusive Orkney *modus vivendi* – with George Mackay Brown as a kind of northern *Wunderhorn* poet to his Mahler – will continue to hold the conflicting aspects of his artistic personality together indefinitely is perhaps doubtful. But it has already inspired some of his best music.

Ballet

Oleg Kerensky

Northern Lights

Scottish Ballet *Sadler's Wells*
Fonteyn and New London Ballet *on tour*
Royal Ballet *Covent Garden*

The transformation of brave little Western Theatre Ballet, which almost collapsed, first into Scottish Theatre Ballet and now into the proudly named Scottish Ballet, is the most rapid and amazing success story of recent years. Scottish Ballet is actually a somewhat misleading title, calling to mind kilts, bagpipes and reels. They do have these, but only in the 19th-century Danish classic *La Sylphide*, which happens to be set in Scotland and which could be seen at Sadler's Wells this week. It returns to London in July, at the Coliseum, with both the company's admirable ballerinas, Elaine McDonald and Patricia Rianne, and with Nureyev as guest.

Nureyev and Fonteyn have already appeared with the Scottish Ballet on various occasions, underlining its status as a major classical company. Its first London season has been a success with critics and public, though not enough of the public realise what treats were being offered. There is st just time to catch Peter Darrell's unusual realistic and dramatic production of *Gisell* fortunately several of the best items fro the modern repertoire will be performe again, along with *La Sylphide*, at tl Coliseum. And of course the company ca be seen on tour for most of the year.

In an understandable attempt to find genuinely Scottish theme, Darrell cho *Mary, Queen of Scots* as his latest fu length work. The London premiere last wee confirmed reports from Glasgow that it an honourable failure. Darrell has bee defeated on three counts: by Noël Goo win's scenario, which attempts to recou all Mary's loves and intrigues from widov hood in France to execution at the Towe by Peter Docherty's drab permanent set ar ugly costumes, making a forlorn attempt reconcile authentic historical concealme with modern balletic revelation; and t John McCabe's lengthy score, with pr tracted interludes, which may have meri in the concert-hall but has neither tl melodic nor the emotional content to su port a ballet longer than *Swan Lake. A* effective work might have been made o of some of the incidents – Mary's relatio ship with Riccio, for example, and tl mystery of Darnley's murder. As it is, Da rell has provided some original and strikir dance images, and has as usual been i genious in making his small company fill large number of roles. But long before th three hours are over, most people hav given up knowing or caring who all the characters are.

Tales of Hoffmann, another full-leng work, was created by Darrell four years ag but this was its London premiere. It h almost everything that *Mary, Queen of Sco* lacks: clever scenery and spectacular co tumes by Alistair Livingstone, three easi understood and touching stories, and c course Offenbach's melodies, skilfully a ranged by John Lanchbery. It's true that th ending is weak, but that is a fault of th opera, and it's also true that there isn't an breathtaking virtuosity. But there *is* plent of romance and humour, and some attractiv lyrical pas de deux. There are three cor trasted ballerina roles, two central ma roles and a supporting male trio whic reappears throughout the ballet in differer guises. The company mustered two comple casts, with Graham Bart as a particular romantic Hoffmann and Gordon Aitken a four strongly differentiated villains. All si female principals were good and the ma trio would be a credit to any company.

The best items in the mixed bills wer Andrée Howard's evocative and dreamy *L Fête Etrange*, excellently done by two di ferent casts, Flemming Flindt's grand guig nol *The Lesson*, powerfully but slightl over-acted by Bart and Andrea Durant, an Darrell's *O Caritas*, an attractive pas d quatre strangely mixing eroticism an tragedy with jolly pop music. It is goo that the company should tackle Fokine *Carnaval* and a bit of Petipa's *Paquita*, bu these so far are good sketches rather tha complete realisations.

The opening gala, a happy and excitin occasion, featured Fonteyn in *The Scarl Pastorale*, a very effective bit of decade

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camp which I reviewed from Edinburgh last year. Her partner this time was Anthony Dowell, perfectly cast as the degenerate nobleman whose search for innocence turns into a kinky debacle.

A week earlier I caught Fonteyn in Oxford, at the end of her long and successful tour with the New London Ballet. She was dancing Ashton's lovely, new *Amazon Forest* pas de deux – all elegant lifts flowing easily into each other – and Skibine's theatrical *Romeo and Juliet*, both with Ivan Nagy of American Ballet Theatre. She looked gloriously young and unstrained in these items, which suit her well now. Many who saw this tour will want to visit the New London Ballet again next time round, even without Dame Margot.

Best wishes and au revoir to the Royal Ballet, off on their fifteenth American trip. Their last press invitations at Covent Garden were for an admirably varied triple-bill – *The Dream*, *Apollo* and *The Concert*. Nureyev was good in the first and ideal in the second, but Desmond Kelly and David Wall respectively were almost as good. Two different casts both made *The Concert* seem one of the best genuinely funny ballets in existence. And welcome to Festival Ballet, who arrive at the Coliseum next week with a revival of that old-fashioned fun-piece *Don Quixote*, in which the vivacious and gifted Italian ballerina Elisabetta Terabust should be ideally cast.

Films

John Coleman

Doctor Zoo

It Shouldn't Happen to a Vet *Warner 2; ABCs Bayswater, Edgware Road and Fulham Road*
e'Lollipop *Warner 1*

Well, was it a deliberate mistake? If only to stem the hysterical flow of telegrams, cables, calls and inquiries of all kinds, the short answer is no. Cute we may be, but mute we're not, and last week's piece should have closed with the review of *The Black Bounty Killer* (Classic, Victoria) adumbrated in its listings. To wit: like Jim Brown, Fred Williamson is a black ex-football-player who has been invited to figure in movies after the black buck, i.e., as a study whose muscles ripple reassuringly against whitey. One had hoped that this whorish passage in the history of the cinema, *Shaft* and after, had outlived its welcome. But nothing that makes money does. So Mr Williamson has written himself a script and stars in it; the event is a Western, he is lethal Boss with the biggest pistol you ever saw and he and his black side-kick turn temporarily from tracking down bad men for rewards to becoming sheriff and deputy of a corrupt hamlet. Boss is a myth-fit, feeding the hungry Mexicans from shanty-town, bulleting his round dozen of apparently one-armed bandits unscathed (though he later suffers a semi-crucifixion that outdoes the best of Brando's), kissing – in the thoroughly ghastly film's nearest approach to earned sarcasm – a heaving-bosomed local schoolma'am and leaving her on the line, 'That's just to satisfy your curiosity'. The large unearned laugh comes when bloodied Boss is ferried secretly back into town. 'Oh, my God,' she emotes, 'bring him in and put him in my bed.' I believe the accompanying movie is a slice of Kung Fu, so just about everyone should get their kicks.

This matter of going out with the front-office's equivalent of a ferret, seeking the rabbit audience, provides a happy link – animal-wise – with the product about to be put through the hebdomadal sieve. Trend-sniffers might note that people are tiring a shade of people, unless accompanied by quadrupeds (*Benji*) or being eaten by sea-beasts (*Jaws*). *It Shouldn't Happen to a Vet*, however staunchly financed by *Reader's Digest*, is the deeply British successor to last year's *All Creatures Great and Small*. And, in the outcome, it brings with it a mild message of cheer: man's humanity towards, and basic superiority over, what we will loosely call creatures is taken for granted in this second adaptation of a James Herriot best-seller. (Since I am at the typewriter, and not an infinity of apes statistically bound to reproduce Shakespeare's sonnets in their own good time, the word 'superiority' is used advisedly. This column is not implying it could run as fast as a cougar or even recall as well as an elephant.) Once in a while, we – British – are rather sound on period and *Vet*, set again in the North Yorkshire dales, in 1938 with the second world war rumbling its approach in the background, has what registers as the correct cosiness of that ostrich-like era. The Herriot-character, beneficially played by excellent John Alderton of the stooped shoulders and ingratiating, ageless smile, is improved by not being Simon Ward; and impeccable Colin Blakely, with matching finesse, replaces Anthony Hopkins as the senior vet of the country practice. Lisa Harrow, who was endearing as the matter-of-fact missus of hero Herriot before, is it again, taking late hours, a baby ('It was an uncomplicated calving, you'll be pleased to hear'), the advent of Armageddon, in her sweet, tweedy stride.

The continuing story is undemanding, amiable, and – most to the point – near-credible. A film director new to me, Eric Till, has seen to it that episodes are chopped off before they either impose a strain on the elasticity of one's belief or over-indulge themselves in their faith in one's faith in the brotherhood of man. Alderton and Blakely establish a sound, irritable, unfathomable interdependence in authentic pre-war style. It is easy to decry our domestic tradition of the stiff upper lip containing the strangled sob, particularly evident on screen on ante-bellum occasions, but – with a rush of chauvinism to the head – we must declare a preference here: better by far the moment when Blakely beautifully runs his lines together to express his potential bereavement if Alderton and wife leave for a smoother, city job (funny, too) than all the transatlantic Hawks-and-Ford exchanges depending on what we have referred to before as the rough-male-kiss-of-fists syndrome. Pleasant incidentals in *Vet* – only EMI or that pre-masticating *Digest* knows why such a 'Carry-On' label has to be attached to a gentle, above-formula film – would include Alderton getting hugely drunk on a local's wine-cellar that ranges up the stairs and extends from rhubarb to turnip; Alderton, earlier, buying a new budgie in haste when the one he came to cure slumps, dead as a mini-dodo, from its perch; Alderton running into all sorts of Yorkshire Mafia as judge at a county fête.

It may prove to be that the least perishable thing associated with *e'Lollipop* (that is its paid-up title, what they say in Lesotho – once Basutoland – for 'lollipop') is the name of its director, one Ashley Lazarus. Raising or risen from the dead is one thing, but this is ridiculous – and consistently, to boot. It connects with our thematic howl of protest against the ignorant use of animals by having a mop-haired white mutt, who could well be left over from *Benji* and barks under the name of Sugarball, trot and scuffle through dreadful weather to lead humanoids – *y compris* José Ferrer as an Italian mission priest – to a snow-job of a finale, with a black child dying to save a sick white child. To catalogue the enormities of this saccharine-saturated affair could be the work of seconds or a lifetime. From where I incredulously sat, it felt as if comprehensive re-education would be the only solution for anyone who stayed its course without being financially indemnified. It is a mind-rotter: all the worse for being located in Southern Africa, *terra incognita* for a lot of us.

Television

Martin Amis

Potter Patter

When two dramas competed for my viewing on Tuesday night, it was not mere STATESMANlike piety that led me to prefer Denis Potter's *Play for Today* (BBC-1) to Howard Brenton's *Play for Britain* (ITV). Potter is one of our funniest and most wayward TV playwrights – just as he is the best equipped of its critics; and he has, in addition, got himself in an intriguing tangle with the BBC over his new trilogy, whose first part, *Brimstone and Treacle*, was due to be shown this week. A scene in which the Devil rapes a mentally vegetablised young girl attracted the interest of the censors, and we were shown the second part, *Double Dare*, instead. I'm angry too, but between ourselves I don't think much real harm has been done: *Treacle* sounds like grand-guignol Potter to me, belonging to that area of his work (and it is large) which irony does not protect. And it *will* be shown. Potter plays are always handled with preposterous caution by the Beeb, but they seem to get through in the end. Anyway, we saw quite a lot of Kika Markham's breasts in *Double Dare* as it was.

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Double Dare, ominously, was about a mad TV playwright who, like the mad TV playwright in the earlier *Only Make Believe*, suffers a neurotic confusion between what he writes and what he lives. Parallel realities ensue. The blocked playwright (Alan Dobie) entertains a young actress (Kika Markham) in his hotel: they both hope this will unblock the play he is writing for her. The blocked play is about an escort girl (Miss Markham, impressive as both) and a porcine, ogling businessman (Malcolm Terris) – the pair of whom suddenly materialise on the adjacent bar stools; from then on the foursome's roles are sinisterly intermeshed. All the parts were slightly overwritten, of course, and as always the relationship that was less intimate to Potter – escort agent and lout – was observed with far more poise than the writerly agonies of the mad TV dramatist, whose tranced, twitching disorientation had me reaching for my electrodes every time he appeared on screen. For all its alienations, however, *Double Dare* worked well enough naturalistically to double my nicotine intake during its screening, and there were the usual three or four scenes with Potter at perfect pitch, where each line of dialogue made you either wince or gloat.

Potter has recently been putting it about that the present triology is a study of religious aspiration, or at least a secular displacement of it. Well, the religious aspiration that interests him most seems to be simply the act of writing: he is intensely aware of being able to do things to people on a page. Potter sees this as a Promethean gesture – a raid on God's fire – and it worries him. (His novel, *Hide and Seek*, was about little else.) Accordingly, his author-figures are updated versions of the Romantic loon, spluttering, apoplectic, touched; and his minor characters are only stylised projections of the author-figure's drives and fears. This is why his plots are obliged to fold in on themselves, and why his themes tend to equate creativity with infatuated rant. It is also, no doubt, why his plays have audacity and nerve.

James Cameron found it relatively easy to shine on Thursday night. After the asphyxiating ooziness of Tony Blackburn on *Top of the Pops* (BBC-1), a paranoid earbend from Mrs Ghandi on *Mrs Ghandi's India* (BBC-2), and the sub-Dimblebese of Monty's funeral ('he'll be driven with his family through the land he loved so well,' etc.), it was nice to hear from somebody quite human, and one had no trouble responding to Cameron's typically relaxed and chatty presentation of *Edgar Wallace – The Man who Made his Name* (BBC-1). John Carey, reviewing a programme on alcoholism which Cameron fronted, once likened his telly-manner to that of a 'benign but zestless lizard'. Yet Cameron appeared to be in spanking shape last Thursday, with his call-me-bwana wardrobe, his foxy, concerned face, and those long caressing esses that his tongue loves to trill.

Not that producer Edward Mirzoeff didn't embrace every opportunity to make his presenter look ridiculous. What is it with these TV producers, that they besiege you with visual documentation even where none exists? Like so many best-selling writers, Edgar Wallace started life as a baby; understandably, no footage of the infant Edgar is available – so we were offered a reel of a Seventies, Mothercare tot grizzling into its duvet. Wallace attended school in the East End of the 1880s and 1890s; understandably, no footage of the satchelled Edgar is available – so we were offered a reel of a thoroughly modern blonde giving word-association lessons to a classful of NW3 kids. It really gave you the atmosphere. When Mirzoeff wasn't anxiously plundering the clips library, he was doing silly things with Cameron himself in order to feast our eyes. 'Wallace used to take a train every day to . . .' Shot of a train approaching: cut to Cameron riding within. Wallace made lots of money . . . Shot of an old Rolls-Royce: cut to Cameron riding within. What next? What next? When I heard the words 'Wallace grew up . . .' I expected to see a shot of Cameron in a pram. Granted that Wallace's life is of sufficient interest to build a programme round (arguable, actually – he seemed a fairly routine self-made spendthrift), surely a mixture of genuine footage and sedentary Cameron would have been equal to the task of keeping us awake.

On Monday the box was a veritable hive of bromides, as Callaghan was profiled, quoted, analysed and badgered on the various *News* and mag-shows. Apparently, this man is now Prime Minister. He dislikes injustice. He likes equality. He is anti-violence and pro-civilisation. Indeed, hardly any bad things seem to appeal to him at all. Against goodness he is not.

In General

Mary Holland

Book Ban

If you live in Buckinghamshire and want to borrow Richard Crossman's *Diaries of a Cabinet Minister* from your local library, prepare yourself for a wait of up to two years. This will be even longer, anything up to ten years' according to present calculations, should your spring reading fancy lightly turn to David Niven's memoirs, *Bring on the Empty Horses*.

At least you should be able to get these books eventually, if you're willing to hang about. This is unlikely to be the case if what you want is a recent novel, or a children's book published during the last 12 months. A year ago Buckinghamshire County Council cut its book fund by 77 per cent, from £291,000 to £65,000 and decided to buy no new fiction, no children's books, no journals or periodicals for its libraries. It also closed the libraries on Saturday afternoons.

What's been going on in Buckinghamshire has caused something of a furore, and not only locally. Petitions have been organised, unions have agitated, the Minister responsible, Hugh Jenkins, has sent in two of his officials to conduct an inquiry. All to precious little avail. The Department of Education and Science's latest missive on the subject opines with regret that the county council is quite within its rights to effect these cuts during a period which the Government has declared must be one of 'no growth' in public expenditure.

But is it within its rights? The public libraries operate under the Libraries and Museums Act of 1964 which lays on them the duty to provide 'a comprehensive and efficient' service. A recent DES working party on the subject laid down that 250 books should be acquired annually per 1,000 of the population, of which 90 books should be non-fiction. According to the chief librarian, that means that Buckinghamshire, with a reading public of half a million, should have a book fund of £518,000 to meet the current rate of inflation in book prices and to comply with DES standards.

Last month, thanks to local agitation, the book fund was somewhat restored. The figure for the coming year is now £131,500 of which £20,000 must go immediately to stock a new library. But the shelves of adult fiction and children's books are to remain so dramatically depleted that the council has issued an appeal for people to bring in any old books they no longer want.

Yet until two years ago Buckinghamshire had one of the best records of any county library service. The present setback would be easier to understand if the council's finances appeared to be under more severe pressure than those of other local authorities. Instead, at the last general meeting a rate increase was struck (of 4 per cent) which was well below the 10 per cent limit which the council had set itself. Even so an appeal that £15,000 be made available to enable the busiest libraries to stay open on Saturday afternoons was rejected.

Buckinghamshire is only the most spectacular offender and as such has become something of a *cause célèbre* among writers and librarians. But Surrey runs it unenviably close. Here there have been calls for a cut of £335,000 in the library service, including a reduction of £188,000 in the book fund and £91,000 in staff costs. This will bring the number of books to be acquired this year down to 50 per cent of that laid down by the DES guidelines and will mean, as in Buckinghamshire, that libraries will have to close on Saturday afternoons.

The sufferings of home counties readers are only a pointer to what the Library Association fears may be cuts in the public library network nationally that will inflict permanent damage on the service. The rot had already been started anyway by the recent runaway inflation in book prices. These have risen by 40 per cent in the last year alone, so even those budgets which have attempted to make some allowance for general inflation and costs have not usually begun to match up to this. Public libraries were struggling to cope with this problem when the Government's White Paper on cuts in public spending over the next five years came along. Here the public library service seems to have proved particularly vulnerable. The projected figures for that part of library finance for which central government will be responsible over the next five years allows for a small, steady increase in current expenditure (e.g., books, wages) but in capital expenditure (e.g., new librar-

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ies) the cutback is drastic – from a proposed £13m. in 1976 to £2m. in 1979-80. Even at current prices one good new library servicing, say, a new town, could swallow the whole of that £2m.

But it is in the area of spending by local authorities that the cuts this year are so severe as to threaten a permanent setback to the system. A survey of 70 public library services conducted last October by the Library Association showed that in real terms 39 had had cuts in their book funds, 24 were pegging level, and only seven had had increases which enabled them to keep pace with inflation.

The cuts are the more lamentable because this country's public libraries have been something of a shining example among the public services. A 1963 survey of people's attitudes showed that more people knew and used their local libraries more regularly than any other amenity. They are heavily patronised by children and old people. The explosion in adult education since the war would have been impossible to achieve without them. Today a good local library has a role in the community which goes far beyond the statutory duty to provide a back-up of educational and recreational facilities. It is also part local information bureau, welfare service, cultural centre. The librarian organises exhibitions, lectures, encourages writers, arranges meetings on subjects of local interest. And all these services suffer too, along with the librarians' morale, when cuts are made.

Weekend Competition

No 2407 Set by John Digby

A Parnassian view of the FA Cup Final: 150-word match reports from any novelist or poet, living or dead, by 23 April.

Result of No 2404 Set by Robin Chase

Anti-blurbs.

Report by Spiro Keats

There were, I now realise, few ways of being clever with 2404. Anti-blurbs of real books – unless cunningly displaced, as in Mr Towling's entry – seemed merely impertinent (and kept giving me ideas for future competitions); anti-blurbs of imaginary books, on the other hand, inevitably depended on straightforward abuse. But then our competitors are keen on, and good at, straightforward abuse. The winners will get £6 each.

Pride and Prejudice (Australian Edn.)
Five strapping sheilas; an Abo-brained Mum and a sarky Pa who shuts himself up in his library all afternoon and aims witty shafts at the *écritoire*. I know what the Misses Bennet need, *you* know what they need – nine inches of good stiff satisfaction – but is there anyone to give it them? Not on your Alice Springs! No one, that is, except a wet clerical cousin and he's a right pommy poufter if ever I smelt one. Ned Kelly! – this book's a drag! No one even gets fossicked until page 300 and even then the tooling takes place off-stage. All the rest of the shaft-sinking (Big Bonzer Bingley and Dude-Man Darcy are the two prospective pile-drivers) comes off after the final credits. All I can say is – if this is the best the Land of Pom can do, you can knock me in the Earl's Court Road.

TERRY TOWLING

Orgiastic Gymnastics is not a book we recommend. Its text is only slightly less repulsive than the 200 full-colour plates of the love act's more unusual variations. Some of you may also find the intimate shots of the famous a trifle offensive. Captions such as 'Bottoms up!' and 'Cock of the North!' further degrade an already degraded volume. This is not the sort of book to leave on a coffee table; you will never see it in a dentist's waiting room. It is filth disguised as respectable research – a whore masquerading as a nun. We strongly urge you not to rush out and buy a copy while stocks last. And if your bookseller is fortunate enough not to stock it, then please refrain from ordering the book under plain cover from Grot Publications Ltd., Box 28, London WC99. If you are sensible enough to take my advice, you'll save yourself the tidy sum of £7.95 (post and packaging free).

TIM HOPKINS

The Anvil and the Caterpillar: Role Reversal in Chaucer, Wells and Mailer. Enoch Pele. Watford University Press. £12.50
Well, what a bummer. This must be the front-runner in any competition for pretentious crap. What can we say? As a literary critic, Dr Pele makes Clive James look like Dr Johnson and Martin Amis look like Clive James. No, that's unfair. Actually, he makes Alan Brien look like Aristotle. Well, let's call him a wanker and leave it at that. And I kid you not, we did leave it at that. The whole gig is so full of literals our proof-reader must have been pissed out of his mind. Not that it makes any difference to this kind of unreadable garbage. I mean, Christ, you know. But don't take our word for it. . .

BASIL RANSOME

A Natural History of Selborne
OK – who'd buy another reprint of this? Conservationists? Naturalists? Reactionary philistines, most likely! An old-hat, underemployed, leisure-soaked clergyman crams 200-odd (and they *are* odd!) pages with toadying correspondence designed to impress those equally unproductive 18th-century rural contemporaries to whom they are addressed. His theories might just impress flat-earthers, certified madmen or sadists. Do *you* know what happens to your good old English swallow in wintertime? It hibernates on frozen beds of national rivers! How do you identify a rare and previously unencountered bird? You shoot it – dead! – and compare it with other shot specimens! God knows, there are plenty of alternative 'countryside' books. Read *them*.

JETHRO B. TUCKETT

Banal, insipid, virtually unreadable, this 'quite stunningly dreary book', as it was called when it first appeared five years ago, is here reissued in a new and somewhat less attractive format. Its by no means riveting subject is covered infinitely better by a whole range of other books, all of them readily available at a far more modest price, and it is to these that the discerning reader will turn for reading matter, reserving this small and compact volume for another quite different purpose: for it is pre-eminently in what has sometimes been referred to as the smallest room that, whatever its manifest shortcomings in other respects, a work by J. R. Noakes has always come triumphantly into its own.

N. F. SIMPSON

Assiac
Chess Board

No 1377 Terence or Jonson?

We remember the one for telling us that fortune favours the brave whereas, some 1,700 years later, Ben Jonson thought it favours fools. Should it be folly to be brave they may be both right, and however that may be this is a position reached by J. E. Dilley (Black). / r2r2k1 /pp2ppbp/q4ktp1/6B1/8/P1KtktPKt2/1PQR1PPP/R5K1/.

White's last, **16) Rd2** threatened to win a piece and practically forced . . . Ktc5, but Black had a fit of bravery which (with some fortuitous help from the other side) brought fortune in the end, . . . **Ktb2:!?!; 17) Qb2:,Kte4; 18) Rd8:††** (Kte4:! with three pieces for the Queen), **Rd8:; 19) Rc1??** (Decisive mistake whereas Ktd4 was playable), **Ktc3; 20) Kh1?,Ktd1!; 21) Qc2,Qf1†; 0-1.**

An equally well deserved book-token will go to 12-year-old Christian de Souza at St. Joseph's College. Our old friend C. Allen sent us this position with young Christian playing Black. /r5k1/ppp2p1p/2qkt2p1/2b2b2/2B5/1P2r3/PB1Q2PP/R3KtR1K/. How he won the 4-pointer.

One of our crack-solvers many years ago, now a prominent academic in the USA is Neil McKelvie. He sent me this statemate study. /1Kt2b3/1k6/3pP3/1kt6/2pP4/kt1P5/3R4/K7/.

1) Ktd7,Bd7: (best); **2) cd:,Kc7; 3) Kb2,Ktc3:; 4) Kc3:,Ktb1†; 5) Kc4:,Ktd2:†; 6) Kd5:,Kd7:;** stalemate. But then, as the author is well aware, a very similar final position occurs in a 1925 Kubbel study.

To find an established composer's virginal brainchild see the first light in a 'Readers' Own' piece rather than in one of our international tourneys is a rare event, but when Teun Balemans of Eindhoven sent me an entry for our Tourney and learned that it was much too late for the current one and much to early for the next one he allowed me to use it in a R.O. week. No space, alas, for more than the main line of this stalemate zugzwang study. /8/1P4B1/3b4/6k1/5kt2/6Kp/7P/8/.

1) Bf8,Be5; 2) Be7†,Kh5; 3) Bf6,Bd6; 4) Be7,Bd8; 5) Bh4,Bd6; 6) Be7,Be5; 7) Bf6,Bb8; 8) Bh4,Ktg6; 9) Kh3:,Ktf4†; 10) Kg3,Ktg6; 11) Kh3,Kth4.

Paul Monsky (USA) sent me this interesting draw study. /8/3k4/8/1pK5/8/3b4/1p6/5R2/.

1) Re1,Kc7; 2) Re7†,Kd8 (or . . . Kc8; 3) Kc6 drawing); **3) Re1,Kd7; 4) Kb6!** draws, whereas, say, 4) Rg1?? loses after . . . Kc7! 5) Re1,Kb7; 6) Kb4,Kc6; 7) Re6†,Kd5; 8) Rel,Kd6!; 9) Rh1,Be4; 10) Rf1,Kd5 (zugzwang); 11) Rg1,Kc6; 12) Ka3,b1=Q or R, winning.

For 6 ladder-points **B,** a win, comes from one of our Jury-men; a pretty piece and not too difficult. **C** (for 7), though not strictly a R.O. entry is in memory of one of this column's oldest friends, Dr. Gyorgy Paros. With an account of his sudden death his *Magyar Sakkélet* successor W. A. Földeak sent me a study by our late friend. A win. Helpful hint: zugzwang. Usual prizes, entries by 20 April.

B: Adam Sobey 1976: 24/1P6/3PP3/3K4/1b6/3k2kt1/.

C: Gyorgy Paros 1934: /8/1p6/1Pp1k3/2Pp4/p2K4/q2P4/PR1B1P2/8/.

Report on No 1374 *Set 19 March*

A: 1) Rg7:†,Bg7:; 2) Rg7:†,Kh8; 3) Rg8†!,Kg8:; 4) Qg6†,Kh8; 5) Qg7††.

B: 1) e8=Kt†,Kh8:; 2) d8=Kt,Kt any; 3) Ktf7††; or . . . **Kf8; 2) d8=Kt, any; Ktg6††.**

C: 1) gh:,Rg5:†; 2) Kd4!!,Rg4†; 3) Kc3!,Rg3†; 4) Kb2,Rg2†; 5) Ka1!,Rg1†; 6) Kb2,Rb1†!; 7) Ka3!, Ra1†; 8) Kb2, etc.

Many bouquets for **C:** Prizes: D. Berdy, R. C. Chaturvedi, M. Cortacans, W. Haverkamp (a German competitor), D. R. Lewis.

Long overdue solution of No 1339

A: (Silver) *Key:* **g8=Kt.**

B: (Hodgson): 1) Re7†,Kg1; 2) Re1†,Bf1; 3) Ba7†,Kh2; 4) Qh8†,Kg2; 5) Re2†,Be2††.

C: (Monsky): 1) Rb5,c3; 2) Rb6:,c2; 3) Kh2, C1=Kt!; 4) Kg1,Ktd3; 5) Kf1,Ktb2; 6) Ke2,Kb1; 7) Ra6,a1=Q; 8) Ra1:†,Ka1:; 9) Ke3,Ktd1†; 10) Kf4,Ktf2;11) Ke3, etc.

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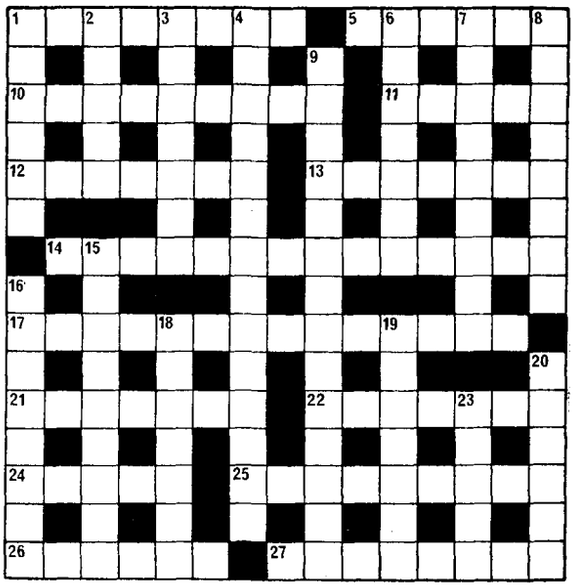
Weekend Crossword 1159

PRIZES: Book tokens of £2 for the first three correct solutions opened. Entries to Crossword 1159, New Statesman, Great Turnstile, London WC1V 7HJ, by first post 20 April.



ACROSS

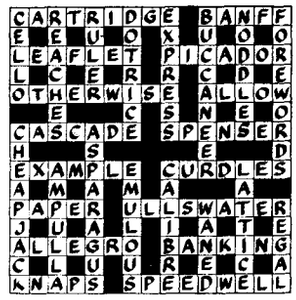
1. Spells of hypocritical talk with tears (8).
5. Manual translated for former pupil (6).
10. Excessive weight of fish caught in big wave (9).
11. If the coach lost heart it would be the reverse of a defeat (5).
12. Name which is the opposite of the French aristocratic one (7).
13. When removing the record it is time to give voice (7).
14. Everyone looks down on his pictures (8, 6).
17. Need I rush round in agitation, being short of food? (14).
21. It's a puzzle so one has to give it back to a different clerk (7).
22. Hard work makes a translator serve the purpose (7).
24. I make a point about one being a fool (5).
25. Irregular small military bodies are pressed into service (9).
26. Wrongly gives assent although most rational (6).
27. Birds would have to wed differently if they had no evidence of marriage (8).

DOWN

1. Struck to give company precedence over workshop (6).
2. Means of raising water with no air rising (5).
3. Find fresh accommodation by putting a girl up on a river (7).
4. Cut down about everything before the wood batters against the figures (14).
6. Young nobleman with an unwilling manner (7).
7. Crime in which a merit might be discovered if there were no detectives (9).
8. Claim a northern town which has no aspiration (8).
9. A feeble cry to art might come from this board (9, 5).
15. Language used in advertisements is a bad habit (9).
16. 'The fringed ——— of thine eye advance' (*The Tempest*) (8).
18. Tells when parsons lose their heads (7).
19. Bird has depression after rules are put up (7).
20. She makes a refined person enter grammar school (6).
23. If he lost heart the navigator would be nameless (5).

SETSQUARE

Solution to No 1157



Prizewinners to No 1157

Ms B. Hopkins (Ipswich)
Philip I. Witriol (London N12)
Ms Florentine Hill (Killiney)

APPOINTMENTS

UNIVERSITY OF DAR ES SALAAM — TANZANIA

Applications are invited for

SENIOR LECTURESHIP/LECTURESHIP IN GEOGRAPHY

Applicants must have commitment to the Geography of Underdevelopment and preferably background in rural/regional planning in the Third World and a PhD or equivalent. Teaching experience, especially at graduate level necessary. Duties will include a major role in the MA programme.

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Vol. 91 No. 2351

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Theatres

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HABITAT FORUM – Interested in national action for the UN Habitat Conference in Vancouver? Habitat Forum at Polytechnic of Central London, 115 New Cavendish St, W1, Saturday, 10 April (Environment) and 1 May (Policy) 9.30 a.m. – 6.30 p.m. Fee £5 (£2.50 for students). Details from Julia Kessel, Continuing Education Centre, 35 Marylebone Road, London NW1. (Tel: 01-486 5811, ext. 379).

HISTORY WORKSHOP: 'Chapters in the History of Sociology', City University, Northampton Sq., EC1. 26-7 June. Eileen Yeo: Early Years of Social Science; Gay Webber: Early Years of Anthropology; Stephan Feuchtwang: Imperialism & Anthropology; Pat Thane: Sociology & Welfare, 1870-1914; Bernard Norton: Social Darwinism & Statistics; Jim Mott: T. H. Green & British Sociology; Raphael Samuel: Sociology & Class; Gareth Stedman Jones: Sociology & Citizenship; Jeff Weeks: Havelock Ellis; Hugh Brody: Malinowski & Margaret Mead; Mark Cousins, Tony Bunyan: Radical Sociology?. Tickets £2 from Jim Mott, City University, London EC1.

ONLY PEACE PLEDGE UNION members can participate at their Annual Conference to be held at Eastbourne House, Bullards Place, London E2, on Saturday, 1 May, when Michael Tippett will open the discussion on war and violence – 'Where do you draw the line?'. Members out of touch should get in. PPU, (NS) 6 Endsleigh Street, London WC1H 0DX.

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON:
A course of
TWO LECTURES
on the topic of 'Two Master Painters: Their View of Myth and Life' will be given by Mr John Boardman, (Merton College, Oxford) as follows:

Lecture 1: (28 April, 1976):
'EXEKIAS'
Institute of Classical Studies, (Lecture Theatre G6), 31-34 Gordon Square, London, WC1 at 5.30 p.m.

Lecture 2: (5 May, 1976):
'THE KLEOPHRADES PAINTER'
Institute of Classical Studies, (Lecture Theatre G6), 31-34 Gordon Square, London WC1 at 5.30 p.m.

Admission free without ticket. Academic Registrar.

CELEBRATE WITH US 1 year of peace in Vietnam on Fri. 30 April at 7 p.m. Holborn Assembly Rooms. Guest of Honour Mr Lai Van Ngoc, Chargé d'Affaires of the DRVN. Film: 'Eroica'. The Salakta Balloon Band, Chris Searle, Live music with Muma's Rock. Vietnamese food. Licensed bar. Adm. £1. For tickets and further details, contact the British Hospital for Vietnam, Room V.A., St Mary of the Angels, Moorhouse Rd, London W2 5DJ. Tel. 01-229 0028.

'WILLIAM GODWIN - Man of Reason': Nicolas Walter. Sun. 11 April 11 a.m. Sunday Forum Sun. 11 April 3 p.m. 'A Forum on Foot, South Place - Origins of South Place & Parliament Court'. Tuesday Discussion on theme 'The Role of the Teacher' Tues. 13 April 7 p.m. 'Language for Life - The Bullock Report': Elizabeth Hunter. South Place Ethical Society, Conway Hall, 25 Red Lion Sq., London WC1. 01-242 8032.

BRIGID BROPHY & MAUREEN DUFFY (Writers' Action Group) discuss 'Public Lending Rights'. 8 p.m. 11 April at 82/83 Eaton Square, SW1. (Nearest Tube Sloane Square). Organised by New Arena of Arts.

CENTRAL LONDON FABIAN SOCIETY. Mrs Jowell, Chairwoman of Camden Social Services, on 'Reform of the Social Services', 14 April, 7.30 p.m. at 5/7 Tavistock Place, London WC1. Collection. All welcome.

THE PRINCIPLES OF SOCIALISM is the subject of our Conference Rally, Friday 16 April 7.30. Conway Hall, Red Lion Sq., WC1. (5 mins Holborn Tube). Full discussion, questions. All welcome. The Socialist Party of Great Britain.

'SEXUAL NEEDS OF HANDICAPPED Young People': Conference 7 June, Royal College of Surgeons. Speakers include a consultant surgeon and psychiatrist. Details: Secretary, Friendship Grp. of Charities, 3 Totternhoe Close, Kenton, Middlesex. Tel. 01-907 3024 & 730 9894.

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON: A lecture entitled: 'Risk Bearing and Agricultural Progress' will be given by Professor Christopher Bliss (University of Essex) on 26 April, 1976 at the London School of Economics, (Old Theatre), Houghton Street, WC2 at 5 p.m. Admission free, without ticket. Academic Registrar.

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON: A lecture entitled: 'The Problem of Disequilibrium in Economics' will be given by Dr Jean-Pascal Benassy (Paris) on 29 April, 1976 at Birkbeck College, (Gresse Street Annexe-Room 401), 7-15 Gresse Street, London WC1 at 6 p.m. Admission free, without ticket. Academic Registrar.

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON: A lecture entitled: 'Totalitarianism' will be given by Dr Claude Polin (Université de Paris-Sorbonne) on 29 April, 1976 at the London School of Economics, (Board Room), Houghton St, London WC2 at 5 p.m. Admission free, without ticket. Academic Registrar.

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON: A lecture entitled: 'Osterreichisches Deutsch' will be given by Professor I. Reiffenstein (University of Salzburg) on 27 April, 1976 at the University of London, Senate House, (Chancellor's Hall), Malet Street, London WC1 at 5.30 p.m. Admission free, without ticket. Academic Registrar.

BUDDHISM AND THE WEST. Talk/discussion: Maurice Walshe, Sunday 11 April 4.30 p.m. The Meeting House, 120 Heath Street, Hampstead, NW3. Details of courses, meetings and meditation from British Buddhist Association. Tel.: 242 5538 (office hours) 388 4589 (weekend).

KRISHNAMURTI STUDY PROGRAMME. Commencing Friday, 23 April 1976 at the Theosophical Society, 50 Gloucester Place, London W1. Inquiries, ring 935 9261.

YOUNG MAPAM (Socialist Zionist Movement) are having a talk given by Rabbi Dow Marmur well known leader of the Reform Movement in Britain on the 'Significance of Progressive Judaism', at 8 p.m. at 37 Broadhurst Gardens, NW6 on Sunday, 11 April.

RAMAKRISHNA VEDANTA CENTRE, 54 Holland Pk. W11. Sun. 11 April 5 p.m. Dr R. E. Monro of King's College on 'Subjectivity and Objectivity'. Wed. meeting at 6.45 p.m. All welcome. Vedanta magazine. 40p.

BUDDHIST SOCIETY, 58 Eccleston Square, London SW1. Sat. 10 April 3 p.m. 'Open Day'. Tues. 13 April 6.30 p.m. 'Introducing Buddhism. All welcome. Send s.a.e. for full programme.

THEOSOPHY. Public Talk & Questions. Sun. 11 April 8 p.m. Free. 'The Origin of Man'. S.a.e. for programme, book list & literature. ULT, 62 Queen's Gardens, London W2 3AL.

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HISTORY WORKSHOP
A JOURNAL OF SOCIALIST HISTORIANS
ISSUE I SPRING 1976

Rodney Hilton Feudalism to Capitalism.
Frank McKenna Victorian Railwayworkers.
Tim Mason Women in Nazi Germany, Part 1.

Gwyn Williams. Welsh Indians; *Anna Davin*, Children's Historical Novels; *Raphael Samuel*, Local History and Oral History; *David Vaisey*, 17thC Court Records; *Jerry Kuehl*, T.V. History; *Hugh Brody*, Colonialism in the Arctic; *Alessandro Triulzi*, Peasant Life in Emilia; *Hans-Josef Steinberg*, Workers Libraries in pre-1914 Germany; *Stan Shipley*, Cabinet-makers Libraries in 19thC London; *E. A. Rymer*, Martyrdom of the Mine (autobiography of a 19thC pit agitator); *Jeffrey Weeks*, Sins and Diseases; *Gabriel Porter*, Oral History and Museums. Feminist History; History and Sociology; History on Stage; Enthusiams; Work in Progress; Archives and Sources; Noticeboard; Workshop Meetings.
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HISTORY WORKSHOP 10
'Workers' Education and Class Consciousness'.
Ruskin College, Oxford, 29-30 May.
Richard Johnson, Jacobins and Chartists; *Barbara Taylor*, Owenism and Feminism; *Ken Worpole*, Working-class Autobiography; *Gareth Stedman Jones*, Workers' Reading in 19th C. Germany; *Geoff Brown*, Early Years of WEA; *Paul Yorke*, Ruskin Strike of 1909; *Martha Vicinus*, *Eddie Frow*, Lancs Dialect Writers; *Arnold Kettle*, Open University; *Michael Barratt Brown*, A Northern Ruskin? etc. Sessions on Literacy; Religion; Class Consciousness, Working-class Writers; Britain; Europe. Places limited to 350. £2 (OAP 50p) from History Workshop, Ruskin College, Oxford.

EAST LONDON HISTORY WORKSHOP
Hoxton Hall, Hoxton Street, N1.
2-4 July.
Jerry White, Flower and Dean Street; *David Englander*, East London in the Great War; *Bill Fishman*, Jewish Radicalism; *Ken Worpole*, People's Autobiography of Hackney; *Pat Ryan*, Poplar in the 1920s; *Brian Nicholson*, Dockland. Work, crime, domestic life, politics, popular culture. Theatre. Music hall. Tickets £2 (Tower Hamlets, Hackney and Newham 75p, OAP 25p) from Jerry White, 65a Casimir Road, E.5.

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